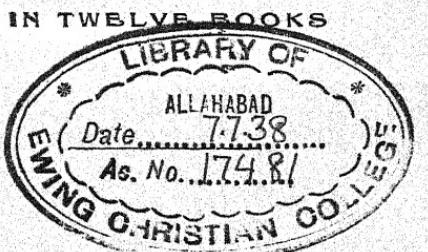


JOHN MILTON

# PARADISE LOST

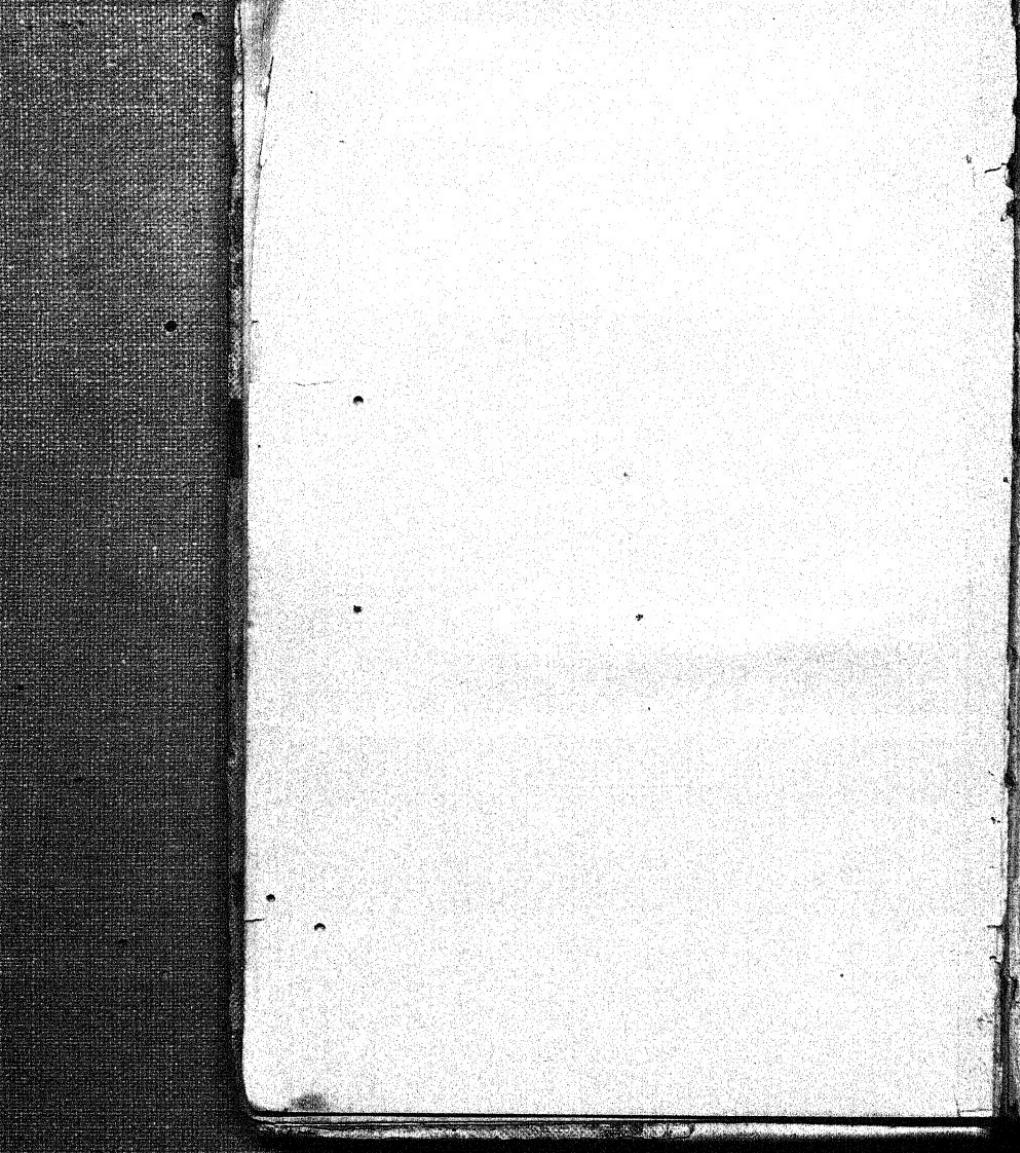
BY

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# PARADISE LOST.

## BOOK I.

### THE ARGUMENT.

This First Book proposes, first in brief, the whole subject, Man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise wherein he was placed: then touches the prime cause of his fall, the Serpent, or rather Satan in the serpent; who revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of Angels, was by the command of God driven out of Heaven, with all his crew, into the great Deep. Which action passed over, the poem hastens into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his Angels now fallen into Hell, described here, not in the Centre, (for heaven and earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed,) but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest called Chaos: here Satan, with his Angels lying on the burning lake, thunder-struck and astonished, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion, calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him; they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded; they rise, their numbers, array of battle, their chief leaders named, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hopes yet of regaining Heaven, but tells them lastly of a new world and new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy or report in Heaven; for that Angels were long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many ancient Fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine there-

on, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium the palace of Satan rises, suddenly built out of the Deep; the infernal Peers there sit in council.

Of Man's first disobedience and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste,  
Brought death into the World and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man  
Restore us and regain the blissful seat,  
Sing, heavenly Muse, that, on the secret top  
Of Oreb or of Sinai, didst inspire  
That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed  
In the beginning how the heavens and earth  
Rose out of Chaos. Or, if Sion hill      10  
Delight the more, and Siloa's brook that flowed  
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence  
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,  
That with no middle flight intends to soar  
Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues  
Things unattempted yet in prose or rime.

And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer  
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,  
Instruct me, for thou knowest; thou from the  
first  
Wast present, and, with mighty wings out-  
spread, 20  
Dovelike satest brooding on the vast Abyss,  
And madest it pregnant. What in me is dark

Illumine; what is low raise and support;  
That, to the highth of this great argument,  
I may assert eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to men.

Say first—for Heaven hides nothing from thy view,

Nor the deep tract of Hell—say first what cause  
Moved our grand parents, in that happy state,  
Favored of Heaven so highly, to fall off      30  
From their Creator, and transgress his will, •  
For one restraint lords of the world besides ;  
Who first seduced them to that foul revolt.—  
The infernal Serpent ; he it was, whose guile,  
Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived  
The mother of mankind, what time his pride  
Had cast him out from Heaven; with all his host

Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, aspiring  
To set himself in glory above his peers,  
He trusted to have equalled the Most High, 40  
If he opposed ; and with ambitious aim  
Against the throne and monarchy of God  
Raised impious war in Heaven and battle proud,  
With vain attempt. Him the almighty Power  
Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky.  
With hideous ruin and combustion, down  
To bottomless perdition ; there to dwell,  
In Adamantine chains and penal fire,

Who durst defy the omnipotent to arms.

Nine times the space that measures day and  
night

To mortal men, he with his horrid crew 51

Lay, vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf,

Confounded though immortal. But his doom

Reserved him to more wrath ; for now the  
thought

Both of lost happiness and lasting pain

Torments him. Round he throws his baleful  
eyes,

That witnessed huge affliction and dismay,  
Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate.

At once, as far as Angel's ken, he views

The dismal situation waste and wild. 60

A dungeon horrible on all sides round

As one great furnace flamed ; yet from those  
flames

No light, but rather darkness visible

Served only to discover sights of woe,

Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where ~~years~~

And rest can never dwell, hope never comes

That comes to all ; but torture ~~without~~ end

Still urges, and a fiery deluge, red

With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.

Such place eternal Justice had prepared 70

For those rebellious, here their prison ordained

In utter darkness, and their portion set,

As far removed from God and light of Heaven  
As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole.  
Oh how unlike the place from whence they fell !  
There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed  
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,  
He soon discerns, and, weltering by his side,  
One next himself in power and next in crime,  
Long after known in Palestine and named      80  
Beëlzebub: to whom the arch-enemy,  
And thence in Heaven called Satan, with bold  
words

Breaking the horrid silence, thus began:  
"If thou beest he,—but oh how fallen ! how  
changed

From him, who, in the happy realms of light,  
Clothed with transcendent brightness didst out-  
shine

Myriads though bright !—if he, whom mutual  
league,

United thoughts and counsels, equal hope  
And hazard in the glorious enterprise  
Joined with me once, now misery hath joined    90  
In equal ruin . . . into what pit thou seest  
From what hight fallen, so much the stronger  
proved

He with his thunder. And till then who knew  
The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,  
Nor what the potent victor in his rage

Can else inflict, do I repent or change,  
Though changed in outward lustre, that fixed  
mind,

And high disdain from sense of injured merit,  
That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,  
And to the fierce contention brought along 100  
Innumerable force of Spirits armed,  
That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,  
His utmost power with adverse power opposed,  
In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,  
And shook his throne. What though the field  
be lost,

All is not lost ; the unconquerable will,  
And study of revenge, immortal hate,  
And courage never to submit or yield,  
And what is else not to be overcome . . .  
That glory never shall his wrath or might 110  
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace  
With suppliant knee, and deify his power,  
Who, from the terror of this arm, so late  
Doubted his empire,—that were low indeed,  
That were an ignominy and shame beneath  
This downfall. Since by fate the strength of  
Gods

And this empyreal substance cannot fail ;  
Since, through experience of this great event,  
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,  
We may with more successful hope resolve 120

To wage by force or guile eternal war,  
Irreconcilable to our grand foe,  
Who now triumphs, and in the excess of joy  
Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven . . . ”

So spake the apostate Angel, though in pain,  
Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair ;  
And him thus answered soon his bold compeer :

“O prince, O chief of many throned Powers,  
That led the embattled Seraphim to war  
Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds, 130  
Fearless endangered Heaven’s perpetual King,  
And put to proof his high supremacy,  
Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate ;  
Too well I see and rue the dire event,  
That, with sad overthrow and foul defeat,  
Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host  
In horrible destruction laid thus low,  
As far as Gods and heavenly essences  
Can perish; for the mind and spirit remains  
Invincible, and vigor soon returns, 140  
Though all our glory extinct, and happy state  
Here swallowed up in endless misery.  
But what if he our conqueror—whom I now  
Of force believe almighty, since no less  
Than such could have o’erpow’red such force as  
ours—

Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,  
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,

That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,  
Or do him mightier service, as his thralls  
By right of war, whate'er his business be ;      150  
Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,  
Or do his errands in the gloomy Deep !  
What can it then avail, though yet we feel  
Strength undiminished, or eternal being  
To undergo eternal punishment ?"

Whereto with speedy words the Arch-Fiend  
replied :

"Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable  
Doing or suffering. But of this be sure,  
To do aught good never will be our task ;  
But ever to do ill our sole delight,      160  
As being the contrary to his high will  
Whom we resist. If then his providence  
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,  
Our labor must be to pervert that end,  
And out of good still to find means of evil ;  
Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps  
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb  
His inmost counsels from their destined aim.—  
But see ! the angry victor hath recalled  
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit      170  
Back to the gates of Heaven ; the sulphurous  
hail,  
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid  
The fiery surge, that from the precipice

Of Heaven received us falling ; and the thunder,  
Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage,  
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now  
To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.  
Let us not slip the occasion, whether scorn  
Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.

Seest thou you dreary plain, forlorn and  
wild,

180

The seat of desolation, void of light,  
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames  
Casts pale and dreadful ? Thither let us tend  
From off the tossing of these fiery waves,  
There rest, if any rest can harbor there,  
And, reassembling our afflicted powers,  
Consult how we may henceforth most offend  
Our enemy, our own loss how repair,  
How overcome this dire calamity,  
What reinforcement we may gain from hope, 190  
If not what resolution from despair."

Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,  
With head up-lift above the wave, and eyes  
That sparkling blazed ; his other parts besides  
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,  
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge  
As whom the fables name of monstrous size  
Titanian or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,  
Briareos or Typhon, whom the den  
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast

200

Leviathan, which God of all his works  
Created highest that swim the ocean-stream—  
Him, haply slumbering on the Norway-foam,  
The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff  
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,  
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind,  
Moors by his side under the lee, while night  
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays—  
So stretched out huge in length the Arch-Fiend  
lay,

Chained on the burning lake, nor even thence 210  
Had risen or heaved his head, but that the will  
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven  
Left him at large to his own dark designs,  
That with reiterated crimes he might  
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought  
Evil to others, and enraged might see  
How all his malice served but to bring forth  
Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shewn  
On Man by him seduced, but on himself  
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance  
poured

220

Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool  
His mighty stature. On each hand the flames  
Driven backward slope their pointing spires, and,  
rolled

In Lillows, leave in the midst a horrid vale.  
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight

Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,  
That felt unusual weight, till on dry land  
He lights; if it were land that ever burned  
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,  
And such appeared in hue, as when the force 230  
Of subterranean wind transports a hill  
Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered side  
Of thundering Ætna, whose combustible  
And fuelled entrails, thence conceiving fire,  
Sublimed with mineral fury aid the winds,  
And leave a singed bottom all involved  
With stench and smoke—such resting found the  
sole

Of unblest feet. Him followed his next mate,  
Both glorying to have 'scaped the Stygian flood  
As Gods, and by their own recovered strength, 240  
Not by the sufferance of supernal Power,

"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"  
Said then the lost Archangel, "this the seat,  
That we must change for Heaven? this mournful  
gloom

For that celestial light? Be it so, since he,  
Who now is sovran, can dispose and bid  
What shall be right; furthest from him is best,  
Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made  
supreme

Above his equals. Farewell happy fields,  
Where joy for ever dwells! hail, horrors! hail, 250

Infernal world! and thou, profoundest Hell,  
Receive thy new possessor, one who brings  
A mind not to be changed by place or time.  
The mind is its own place, and in itself  
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.  
What matter where if I be still the same,  
And what I should be, all but less than he  
Whom thunder hath made greater. Here at least  
We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built  
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence; 260  
Here we may reign secure, and in my choice  
To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell,—  
Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.  
But wherefore let me then our faithful friends,  
The associates and copartners of our loss,  
Lie thus astonished on the oblivious pool,  
And call them not to share with us their part  
In this unhappy mansion, or once more  
With rallied arms to try what may be yet  
Regained in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell?"

So Satan spake, and him Beëlzebub 271  
Thus answered: "Leader of those armies bright,  
Which but the Omnipotent none could have  
foiled,

If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge  
Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft  
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge  
Of battle, when it raged, in all assaults

Their surest signal, they will soon resume  
New courage and revive, though now they lie  
Grovelling and prostrate on yon lake of fire, 280  
As we erewhile, astounded and amazed,—  
No wonder, fallen such a pernicious highth."

He scarce had ceased when the superior Fiend  
Was moving toward the shore, his ponderous  
shield,

Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,  
Behind him cast. The broad circumference  
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb  
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views  
At evening, from the top of Fesolè,  
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands, 290  
Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.  
His spear—to equal which the tallest pine  
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast  
Of some great ammiral, were but a wand—  
He walked with, to support uneasy steps  
Over the burning marle, not like those steps  
On Heaven's azure; and the torrid clime  
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.  
Nathless he so endured, till on the beach  
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and called 300  
His legions, Angel-forms, who lay entranced,  
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks  
In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades  
High over-arched embower; or scattered sedge

Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed  
Hath vexed the Red-sea coast, whose waves  
o'erthrew

Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,  
While with perfidious hatred they pursued  
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld  
From the safe shore their floating carcases      310  
And broken chariot-wheels; so thick bestrown,  
Abject and lost, lay these, covering the flood,  
Under amazement of their hideous change.  
He called so loud that all the hollow deep  
Of Hell resounded: "Princes, Potentates,  
Warriors, the flower of Heaven, once yours, now  
lost,

If such astonishment as this can seize  
Eternal Spirits. Or have ye chosen this place  
After the toil of battle to repose  
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find      320  
To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?  
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn  
To adore the conqueror—who now beholds  
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood,  
With scattered arms and ensigns—tilt anon  
His swift pursuers from Heaven-gates discern  
The advantage, and descending tread us down,  
Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts  
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf?—  
Awake! arise! or be for ever fallen."      330

They heard and were abashed, and up they  
sprung

Upon the wing; as when men wont to watch,  
On duty sleeping found by whom they dread,  
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.

Nor did they not perceive the evil plight  
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;  
Yet to their general's voice they soon obeyed,  
Innumerable. As when the potent rod  
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,  
Waved round the coast, up-called a pitchy  
cloud

340

Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,  
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung  
Like night, and darkened all the land of Nile:  
So numberless were those bad Angels seen,  
Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell,  
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;  
Till, as a signal given, the uplifted spear  
Of their great Sultan waving to direct  
Their course, in even balance down they light  
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain; 35a  
A multitude, like which the populous North  
Poured never from her frozen loins, to pass  
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons  
Came like a deluge on the South, and spread  
Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands.  
Forthwith, from every squadron and each band,

The heads and leaders thither haste where stood  
Their great commander, godlike shapes, and  
forms

Excelling human, princely dignities,  
And Powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones; 360  
Though of their names in heavenly records now  
Be no memorial, blotted out and razed  
By their rebellion from the books of life.  
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve  
Got them new names, till wandering o'er the  
Earth,

Through God's high sufferance for the trial of  
man,

By falsities and lies the greatest part  
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake  
God their Creator, and the invisible  
Glory of him that made them to transform 370  
Oft to the image of a brute, adorned  
With gay religions full of pomp and gold,  
And devils to adore for deities.

Then were they known to men by various names  
And various idols, through the heathen world.

Say, Muse, their names then known, who first,  
who last,

Roused from the slumber on that fiery couch,  
At their great emperor's call, as next in worth,  
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,  
While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof. 380

The chief were those who, from the pit of Hell  
Roaming to seek their prey on Earth, durst fix  
Their seats long after next the seat of God,  
Their altars by his altar, Gods adored  
Among the nations round, and durst abide  
Jehovah thundering out of Sion, throned  
Between the Cherubim; yea, often placed  
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,  
Abominations; and with cursed things  
His holy rites and solemn feasts profaned,      390  
And with their darkness durst affront his light.

First Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with  
blood  
Of human sacrifice and parents' tears,  
Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels  
loud,  
Their children's cries unheard, that passed  
through fire  
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite  
Worshiped in Rabba and her watery plain,  
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream  
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such  
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart      400  
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build  
His temple right against the temple of God,  
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove  
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence  
And black Gehenna called, the type of Hell.

Next Chemos, the obscene dread of Moab's sons,  
From Aroar to Nebo and the wild  
Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon  
And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond  
The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines,      410  
And Eleälè to the Asphaltic pool.

Peor his other name, when he enticed  
Israel, in Sittim on their march from Nile,  
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.

Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged  
Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove  
Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;  
Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.  
With these came they, who, from the bordering  
flood

Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts      420  
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names  
Of Baälim and Ashtaroth, those male,  
These feminine: for Spirits when they please  
Can either sex assume, or both; so soft  
And uncompounded is their essence pure,  
Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,  
Non founded on the brittle strength of bones,  
Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they  
choose,

Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,  
Can execute their aery purposes,      430  
And works of love or enmity fulfil.

For those the race of Israel oft forsook  
Their living Strength, and unfrequented left  
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down  
To bestial Gods ; for which their heads, as low  
Bowed down in battle, sunk before the spear  
Of despicable foes. With these in troop  
Came Astoreth, whom the Phoenicians called.  
Astarté, queen of heaven, with crescent horns ;  
To whose bright image, nightly by the moon, 440  
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs ;  
In Sion also not unsung, where stood  
Her temple on the offensive mountain, built  
By that uxorious king, whose heart, though  
large,  
Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell  
To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,  
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allureth  
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate,  
In amorous ditties all a summer's day,  
While smooth Adonis from his native rock 450  
Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood  
Of Thammuz yearly wounded. The love-tale  
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,  
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch  
Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,  
His eye surveyed the dark idolatries  
Of alienated Judah. Next came one  
Who mourned in earnest, when the captive ark

Maimed his brute image, head and hands lopt off,  
In his own temple, on the grunsel edge, 460  
Where he fell flat and shamed his worshipers.  
Dagon his name, sea monster, upward man  
And downward fish ; yet had his temple high  
Reared in Azotus, dreaded through the coast  
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,  
And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.  
Him followed Rimmon, whose delightful seat  
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks  
Of Abana and Pharpar, lucid streams.  
He also against the house of God was bold ; 470  
A leper once he lost and gained a king,  
Ahaz his sottish conqueror, whom he drew  
God's altar to disparage and displace  
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn  
His odious offerings, and adore the Gods  
Whom he had vanquished. After these appeared  
A crew, who, under names of old renown,  
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,  
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused  
Fanatic Egypt and her priests to seek 480  
Their wandering Gods disguised in brutish forms  
Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape  
The infection, when their borrowed gold com-  
posed  
The calf in Oreb, and the rebel king  
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,

Likening his Maker to the grazed ox,  
Jehovah, who, in one night when he passed  
From Egypt marching, equalled with one stroke  
Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.  
Belial came last, than whom a Spirit more lewd  
Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love 491  
Vice for itself. To him no temple stood  
Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he  
In temples and at altars, when the priest  
Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who filled  
With lust and violence the house of God?  
In courts and palaces he also reigns,  
And in luxurious cities, where the noise  
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,  
And injury and outrage; and when night 500  
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons  
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.  
Witness the streets of Sodom and that night  
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door  
Exposed a matron to avoid worse rape.

These were the prime in order and in might;  
The rest were long to tell, though far renowned,  
The Ionian gods, of Javan's issue held  
Gods, yet confessed later than Heaven and Earth,  
Their boasted parents; Titan, Heaven's first-  
born,  
With his enormous brood, and birthright seized 511

By younger Saturn ; he from mightier Jove,  
His own and Rhea's son, like measure found ;  
So Jove usurping reigned. These first in Crete  
And Ida known, thence on the snowy top  
Of cold Olympus ruled the middle air,  
Their highest heaven ; or on the Delphian cliff,  
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds  
Of Doric land ; or who with Saturn old  
Fled over Adria to the Hesperian fields,      520  
And o'er the Celtic roamed the utmost isles.

All these and more came flocking ; but with  
looks  
Downcast and damp, yet such wherein appeared  
Obscure some glimpse of joy to have found their  
chief

Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost  
In loss itself ; which on his countenance cast  
Like doubtful hue. But he, his wonted pride  
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore  
Semblance of worth not substance, gently raised  
Their fainting courage, and dispelled their  
fears ;      530

Then straight commands that, at the warlike  
sound

Of trumpets loud and clarions, be up-reared  
His mighty standard. That proud Honour  
claimed

Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall ;

Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled  
The imperial ensign, which, full high advanced,  
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,  
With gems and golden lustre rich emblazed,  
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while  
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds :      540

At which the universal host up-sent  
A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond  
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.  
All in a moment through the gloom were seen  
Ten thousand banners rise into the air,  
With orient colours waving; with them rose  
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms  
Appeared, and serried shields in thick array  
Of depth immeasurable. Anon they move  
In perfect phalanx, to the Dorian mood      550

Of flutes and soft recorders; such as raised  
To hight of noblest temper heroes old,  
Arming to battle, and instead of rage  
Deliberate valour breathed, firm and unmoved  
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;  
For wanting power to mitigate and swage  
With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and  
chase

Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain  
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,  
Breathing united force with fixed thought,      560

Moved on in silence, to soft pipes that charmed

Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil; and now  
Advanced in view they stand, a horrid front  
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise  
Of warriors old, with ordered spear and shield,  
Awaiting what command their mighty chief  
Had to impose. He through the armed files  
Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse  
The whole battalion views, their order due,  
Their visages and statures as of Gods;        570  
Their number last he sums. And now his heart  
Distends with pride, and, hardening in his  
strength,  
Glories; for never, since created man,  
Met such embodied force as named with these  
Could merit more than that small infantry  
Warred on by cranes: though all the giant-brood  
Of Phlegra with the heroic race were joined  
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side  
Mixed with auxiliar Gods; and what resounds  
In fable or romance of Uther's son,        580  
Begirt with British and Armoric knights;  
And all who since, baptized or infidel,  
Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,  
Damasco or Marocco or Trebisond,  
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,  
When Charlemain with all his peerage fell  
By Foutarabbia. Thus far these beyond  
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed

Their dread commander. He, above the rest  
In shape and gesture proudly eminent, 590  
Stood like a tower; his form had yet not lost  
All her original brightness, nor appeared  
Less than Archangel ruined, and the excess  
Of glory obscured. As when the sun new-risen  
Looks through the horizontal misty air  
Shorn of his beams, or, from behind the moon,  
In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds  
On half the nations, and with fear of change  
Perplexes monarchs: darkened so yet shone  
Above them all the Archangel; but his face 600  
Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care  
Set on his faded cheek, but under brows  
Of dauntless courage and considerate pride,  
Waiting revenge. Cruel his eye, but cast  
Signs of remorse and passion to behold  
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather  
—Far other once beheld in bliss—condemned  
For ever now to have their lot in pain;  
Millions of Spirits for his fault amerced  
Of Heaven, and from eternal spendours flung 610  
For his revolt, yet faithful how they stood,  
Their glory withered: as, when heaven's fire  
Hath scathed the forest oaks or mountain-pines,  
With signed top their stately growth though bare  
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared  
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend

From wing to wing, and half enclose him round  
With all his peers; attention held them mute.  
Thrice he assayed, and thrice, in spite of scorn,  
Tears, such as Angels weep, burst forth; at  
last

620

Words interwove with sighs found out their way.

"O myriads of immortal Spirits, O Powers  
Matchless, but with the Almighty; and that  
strife

Was not inglorious, though the event was dire,  
As this place testifies, and this dire change  
Hateful to utter. But what power of mind,  
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth  
Of knowledge past or present, could have feared  
How such united force of Gods, how such  
As stood like these, could ever know repulse? 630  
For who can yet believe, though after loss,  
That all these puissant legions, whose exile  
Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to re-ascend,  
Self-raised, and repossess their native seat?  
For me be witness all the host of Heaven  
If counsels different, or danger shunned  
By me, have lost our hopes. But he, who reigns  
Monarch in Heaven, till then as one secure  
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,  
Consent or custom, and his regal state 640  
Put forth at full, but still his strength concealed,

Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.

Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,

So as not either to provoke, or dread  
New war provoked; our better part remains  
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,  
What force affected not; that he no less  
At length from us may find, who overcomes  
By force hath overcome but half his foe.

Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife 650  
There went a fame in Heaven that he ere long  
Intended to create, and therein plant  
A generation, whom his choice regard  
Should favor equal to the sons of Heaven.  
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps  
Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere;  
For this infernal pit shall never hold  
Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor the Abyss  
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts  
Full counsel must mature. Peace is despaired—  
For who can think submission? — war then,

war,

661

Open or understood, must be resolved.”

He spake, and to confirm his words out-flew  
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs  
Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze  
Far round illumined Hell. Highly they raged

Against the Highest, and fierce, with grapsed  
arms,

Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war,  
Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top 670  
Belched fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire  
Shone with a glossy scurf, undoubted sign  
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,  
The work of sulphur. Thither, winged with  
speed,

A numerous brigade hastened: as when bands  
Of pioneers, with spade and pickaxe armed,  
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field  
Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on,  
Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell  
From Heaven; for even in Heaven his looks and  
thoughts 680

Were always downward bent, admiring more  
The riches of Heaven's pavement, trodden gold,  
Than aught divine or holy else enjoyed  
In vision beatific. By him first  
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,  
Ransacked the centre, and with impious hands  
Rifled the bowels of their mother-earth  
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew  
Opened into the hill a spacious wound,  
And digged out ribs of gold. Let none  
admire 690

That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best  
Deserve the precious bane. And here let those  
Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell  
Of Babel and the works of Memphian kings,  
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame  
And strength and art are easily outdone  
By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour  
What in an age they, with incessant toil  
And hands innumerable, scarce perform.  
Nigh on the plain in many cells prepared, 700<sup>\*</sup>  
That underneath had veins of liquid fire  
Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude  
With wondrous art founded the massy ore,  
Severing each kind, and scummed the bullion  
dross;

A third as soon had formed within the ground  
A various mould, and from the boiling cells  
By strange conveyance filled each hollow nook;  
As in an organ, from one blast of wind,  
To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.  
Anon out of the earth a fabric huge 710  
Rose, like an exhalation, with the sound  
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,  
Built like a temple, where pilasters round  
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid  
With golden architrave; nor did there want  
Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven;  
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon

Nor great Alcairo such magnificence  
Equalled in all their glories, to enshrine  
Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat      720  
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove  
In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile  
Stood, fixed her stately hight, and straight the  
doors

Opening their brazen folds discover wide  
Within her ample spaces, o'er the smooth  
And level pavement. From the arched roof  
Pendent, by subtle magic, many a row  
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed  
With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light  
As from a sky. The hasty multitude      730  
Admiring entered, and the work some praise  
And some the architect. His hand was known  
In Heaven by many a towered structure high,  
Where sceptred Angels held their residence,  
And sat as princes, whom the supreme King  
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,  
Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright:  
Nor was his name unheard or unadored  
In ancient Greese; and in Ausonian land  
Men called him Mulciber; and how he fell      740  
From Heaven they fabled, thrown by angry Jove  
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements; from morn  
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,  
A summer's day; and with the setting sun

Dropt from the zenith, like a falling star,  
On Lemnos, the Ægean isle. Thus they relate,  
Erring, for he with this rebellious rout  
Fell long before: nor aught availed him now  
To have built in Heaven high towers, nor did he  
    'scape

By all his engines, but was headlong sent      750  
With his industrious crew to build in Hell.

Meanwhile the winged haralds, by command  
Of sovran power, with awful ceremony  
And trumpet's sound, throughout the host pro-  
    claim

A solemn council forthwith to be held  
At Pandemonium, the high capital  
Of Satan and his peers. Their summons called,  
From every band and squared regiment,  
By place or choice the worthiest; they anon  
With hundreds and with thousands trooping  
    came

Attended. All access was thronged, the gates      761  
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall—  
Though like a covered field, where champions  
    bold

Wont ride in armed, and, at the Soldan's chair,  
Defied the best of Panim chivalry  
To mortal combat, or career with lance—  
Thick swarmed, both on the ground and in the  
    air,

Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings. As  
bees,

In spring-time when the sun with Taurus rides,  
Pour forth their populous youth about the  
hive 770

In clusters; they, among fresh dews and flowers,  
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,  
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,  
New rubbed with balm, expatiate and confer  
Their state-affairs: so thick the airy crowd  
Swarmed and were straitened; till, the signal  
given,

Behold a wonder! They but now who seemed  
In bigness to surpass earth's giant-sons,  
Now less than smallest dwarfs in narrow room  
Throng numberless, like that pygmean race 780

Beyond the Indian mount, or faery elves,  
Whose midnight revels, by a forest-side  
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,  
Or dreams he sees, while overhead the moon  
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth  
Wheels her pale course; they, on their mirth and  
dance .

Intent, with jocund music charm his ear:  
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.  
Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms  
Reduced their shapes immense, and were at  
large,

Though without number still, amidst the hall 791  
Of that infernal court. But far within,  
And in their own dimensions like themselves,  
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim  
In close recess and secret conclave sat,  
A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,  
Frequent and full. After short silence then  
And summons read the great consult began.

# PARADISE LOST.

## BOOK II.

### THE ARGUMENT.

THE consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle be to be hazarded for the recovery of Heaven; some advise it, others dissuade: a third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan, to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in Heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature, equal or not much inferior to themselves, about this time to be created; their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search; Satan their chief undertakes alone the voyage, is honoured and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways, and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to Hell-gates, finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them, by whom at length they are opened, and discover to him the great gulf between Hell and Heaven; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the power of that place, to the sigh<sup>\*</sup> of this new World which he sought.

HIGH on a throne of royal state—which far  
Outshone the wealth of Ormuz and of Ind,  
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand  
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold—

Satan exalted sat, by merit raised  
To that bad eminence; and, from despair  
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires  
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue  
Vain war with Heaven, and, by success untaught,  
He proud imaginations thus displayed.      10

"Powers and Dominions, deities of Heaven—  
For since no Deep within her gulf can hold  
Immortal vigour, though oppressed and fallen,  
I give not Heaven for lost; from this descent  
Celestial virtues rising will appear  
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,  
And trust themselves to fear no second fate—  
Me though just right, and the fixed laws of  
Heaven,

Did first create your leader, next free choice,  
With what besides, in counsel or in fight,      20  
Hath been achieved of merit, yet this loss  
Thus far at least recovered hath much more  
Established in a safe unenvied throne,  
Yielded with full consent. The happier state  
In Heaven, which follows dignity, might draw  
Envy from each inferior; but who here  
Will envy whom the highest place exposes  
Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim  
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share  
Of endless pain? Where there is then no good      30  
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there

From faction; for none sure will claim in Hell  
Precedence, none whose portion is so small  
Of present pain that with ambitious mind  
Will covet more. With this advantage then  
To union and firm faith and firm accord,  
More than can be in Heaven, we now return  
To claim our just inheritance of old,  
Surer to prosper than prosperity  
Could have assured us; and by what best way 40  
Whether of open war or covert guile,  
We now debate; who can advise may speak."

He ceased, and next him Moloch, sceptred  
king,

Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest Spirit  
That fought in Heaven, now fiercer by despair:  
His trust was with the Eternal to be deemed  
Equal in strength, and rather than be less  
Cared not to be at all. With that care lost  
Went all his fear; of God, or Hell, or worse  
He recked not, and these words thereafter spake:

"My sentence is for open war. Of wiles, 51  
More unexpert, I boast not; them let those  
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now.  
For, while they sit contriving, shall the rest,  
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait  
The signal to ascend, sit lingering here,  
Heaven's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place  
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,

The prison of his tyranny who reigns  
By our delay? No, let us rather choose, 60  
Armed with Hell-flames and fury, all at once  
O'er Heaven's high towers to force resistless way,  
Turning our tortures into horrid arms  
Against the torturer; when to meet the noise  
Of his almighty engine he shall hear  
Infernal thunder, and for lightning see  
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage  
Among his Angles, and his throne itself  
Mixed with Tartarean sulphur and strange fire,  
His own invented torments. But perhaps 70  
The way seems difficult and steep to scale  
With upright wing against a higher foe—  
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench  
(Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,  
'That in our proper motion we ascend  
Up to our native seat; descent and fall  
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,  
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear  
Insulting, and pursued us through the Deep,  
With what compulsion and laborious flight 80  
We-sunk thus low? The ascent is easy then;  
The event is feared. Should we again provoke  
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may  
find  
To our destruction—if there be in Hell  
Fear to be worse destroyed. What can be worse

Than to dwell here, driven out from bliss, con-  
demned

In this abhorred Deep to utter woe?  
Where pain of unextinguishable fire  
Must exercise us, without hope of end,  
The vassals of his anger, when the scourge      90  
Inexorably, and the torturing hour  
Calls us to penance. More destroyed than thus  
We should be quite abolished and expire.  
What fear we then? what doubt we do incense  
His utmost ire? which, to the highth enraged,  
Will either quite consume us, and reduce  
To nothing this essential—happier far  
Than miserable to have eternal being!—  
Or, if our substance be indeed divine,  
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst      100  
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel  
Our power sufficient to disturb his Heaven,  
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,  
Though inaccessible, his fatal throne;  
Which, if not victory, is yet revenge.”

He ended frowning, and his look denounced  
Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous  
To less than gods. On the other side up rose  
Belial, in act more graceful and humane.  
A fairer person lost not Heaven; he seemed      110  
For dignity composed and high exploit.

But all was false and hollow—though his  
tongue

Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear  
The better reason, to perplex and dash  
Maturest counsels—for his thoughts were low;  
To vice industrious, but to noble deeds  
Timorous and slothful. Yet he pleased the ear,  
And with persuasive accent thus began:

"I should be much for open war, O Peers,  
As not behind in hate, if what was urged      120  
Main reason to persuade immediate war  
Did not dissude me most, and seem to cast  
Ominous conjecture on the whole success;  
When he, who most excels in fact of arms,  
In what he counsels and in what excels  
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair  
And utter dissolution, as the scope  
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.

First, what revenge? The towers of Heaven are  
filled

With armed watch, that render all access      130  
Impregnable; oft on the bordering Deep  
Encamped their legions, or, with obscure wing,  
Scout far and wide into the realm of Night,  
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way  
By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise,  
With blackest insurrection to confound  
Heaven's purest light, yet our great enemy

All incorruptible would on his throne  
Sit unpolluted, and the ethereal mould,  
Incapable of stain, would soon expel.      14c  
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,  
Victorious. Thus repulsed, our final hope  
Is flat despair; we must exasperate  
The almighty victor to spend all his rage,  
And that must end us; that must be our cure,  
To be no more. Sad cure! for who would lose,  
Through full of pain, this intellectual being,  
Those thoughts that wander through eternity?  
To perish rather, swallowed up and lost  
In the wide womb of uncreated night,      15c  
Devoid of sense and motion. And who knows,  
Let this be good, whether our angry foe  
Can give it, or will ever? How he can  
Is doubtful; that he never will, is sure.  
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,  
—Belike through impotence or unaware—  
To give his enemies their wish, and end  
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves  
To punish endless? ‘Wherefore cease we then?’  
Say they who counsel war; ‘we are decreed,      16c  
Reserved, and destined to eternal woe.  
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more?  
What can we suffer worse?’ Is this then worst,  
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?  
What! when we fled amain, pursued, and struck

With heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought  
The Deep to shelter us . . . This Hell then  
seemed.

A refuge from those wounds. Or when we lay  
Chained on the burning lake? . . . that sure  
was worse.

What if the breath that kindled those grim  
fires,

170

Awaked, should blow them into sevenfold rage,  
And plunge us in the flames? or from above  
Should intermitted Vengeance arm again  
His red right hand to plague us? What if all  
Her stores were opened, and this firmament  
Of Hell should sprout her cataracts of fire,  
Impendent horrors, threatening hideous fall  
One day upon our heads! While we, perhaps  
Designing or exhorting glorious war,  
Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurled, 180  
Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey  
Of racking whirlwinds, or forever sunk  
Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains;  
There to converse with everlasting groans,  
Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,  
Ages of hopeless end. This would be worse.  
War therefore, open or concealed alike,  
My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile  
With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye

Views all things at one view? He from Heaven's  
highth

190

All these our motions vain sees and derides;  
Not more almighty to resist our might  
Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles,  
Shall we then live thus vile, the race of Heaven  
Thus trampled, thus expelled to suffer here  
Chains and these torments? Better these than  
worse,

By my advice; since fate inevitable  
Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,  
The victor's will. To suffer, as to do,  
Our strength is equal, nor the law unjust

200

That so ordains. This was at first resolved  
If we were wise, against so great a foe  
Contending and so doubtful what might fall.  
I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold  
And venturous, if that fail them, shrink and  
fear

What yet they know must follow, to endure  
Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,  
The sentence of their conqueror. This is now  
Our doom, which if we can sustain and bear,  
Our supreme foe in time may much remit  
His anger, and perhaps, thus far removed,  
Not mind us, not offending, satisfied

With what is punished; whence these raging fires  
Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.

1748

Our purer essence then will overcome  
Their noxious vapour, or inured not feel,  
Or, changed at length and to the place conformed  
In temper and in nature, will receive  
Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;  
This horror will grow mild, this darkness light: 220  
Besides what hope the never ending flight  
Of future days may bring, what chance, what  
change

Worth waiting, since our present lot appears  
For happy though but ill, for ill not worst;  
If we procure not to ourselves more woe."

Thus Belial, with words clothed in reason's  
garb,  
Counselled ignoble ease and peaceful sloth,  
Not peace; and after him thus Mammon spake:  
"Either to disenthrone the king of Heaven  
We war, if war be best, or to regain 230  
Our own right lost. Him to unthrone we then  
May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield  
To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife.  
The former, vain to hope, argues as vain  
The latter; for what place can be for us  
Within Heaven's bound, unless Heaven's Lord  
supreme

We overpower? Suppose he should relent,  
And publish grace to all, on promise made  
Of new subjection; with what eyes could we

Stand in his presence humble, and receive      240  
Strict laws imposed, to celebrate his throne  
With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing  
Forced Halleluiyahs; while he lordly sits  
Our envied sovran, and his altar breathes  
Ambrosial odors and ambrosial flowers,  
Our servile offerings? This must be our task  
In Heaven, this our delight. How wearisome  
Eternity so spent, in worship paid  
To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue  
By force impossible, by leave obtained      250  
Unacceptable, though in Heaven, our state  
Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek  
Our own good from ourselves, and from our own  
Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,  
Free and to none accountable, preferring  
Hard Liberty before the easy yoke  
Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear  
Then most conspicuous, when great things of  
small,  
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse  
We can create, and in what place soe'er      260  
Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain,  
Through labor and endurance. This deep world  
Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst  
Thick clouds and dark doth Heaven's all-ruling  
Sire  
Choose to reside, his glory unobscured,

And with the majesty of darkness round  
Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders  
    roar

Mustering their rage, and Heaven resembles Hell!  
As he our darkness, cannot we his light  
Imitate when we please? This desert so     270  
Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold,  
Nor wait we skill or art, from whence to raise  
Magnificence; and what can Heaven shew more  
Our torments also may in length of time  
Become our elements, these piercing fires  
As soft as now severe, our temper changed  
Into their temper, which must needs remove  
The sensible of pain. All things invite  
To peaceful counsels and the settled state  
Of order, how in safety best we may     280  
Compose our present evils, with regard  
Of what we are and where,\* dismissing quite  
All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise."

He scarce had finished, when such murmur  
    filled  
The assembly, as when hollow rocks retain  
The sound of blustering winds, which all night  
    long  
Had roused the sea, now with hoarse cadence  
    lull  
Seafaring men o'erwatched, whose bark, by  
chance,

Or pinnace, anchors in a craggy bay  
After the tempest: such applaute was heard 290  
As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleased,  
Advising peace, for such another field  
They dreaded worse than Hell; so much the fear  
Of thunder and the sword of Michaël  
Wrought still within them; and no less desire  
To found this nether empire, which might rise,  
By policy and long process of time,  
In emulation opposite to Heaven.  
Which when Beëlzebub perceived, than whom,  
Satan except, none higher sat, with grave 300  
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seemed  
A pillar of state; deep on his front engraven  
Deliberation sat, and public care;  
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,  
Majestic though in ruin. Sage he stood,  
With Atlantean shoulders, fit to bear  
The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look  
Drew audience and attention still as night  
Or summer's noon tide air, while thus he spake:  
"Thrones and imperial Powers, Offspring of  
Heaven,  
Ethereal Virtues! or these titles now 311  
Must we renounce, and changing style be called  
Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote  
Inclines, here to continue, and build up here  
A growing empire; doubtless! while we dream,

And know not that the King of Heaven hath  
doomed

This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat  
Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt  
From Heaven's high jurisdiction, in new league  
Banded against his throne, but to remain      320  
In strictest bondage, though thus far removed  
Under the inevitable curb, reserved

His captive multitude; for he, be sure,  
In highth or depth, still first and last will reign  
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part

By our revolt, but over Hell extend  
His empire, and with iron sceptre rule  
Us here, as with his golden those in Heaven.  
What sit we then projecting peace and war?

War hath determined us, and foiled with  
loss      330

Irreparable; terms of peace yet none  
Vouchsafed or sought; for what peace will be  
given

To us enslaved, but custody severe,  
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment  
Inflicted? and what peace can we return,  
But to our power hostility and hate,  
Untamed reluctance, and revenge, though slow  
Yet ever plotting how the conqueror least  
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice  
In doing what we most in suffering feel?      340

Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need  
With dangerous expedition to invade  
Heaven, whose high walls fear no assault or  
seige

Or ambush from the Deep. What if we find  
Some easier enterprise! There is a place—  
If ancient and prophetic fame in Heaven  
Err not—another world, the happy seat  
Of some new race called Man, about this time  
To be created like to us, though less  
In power and excellence, but favoured more 350  
Of him who rules above; so was his will  
Pronounced among the Gods, and by an oath,  
That shook Heaven's whole circumference, con-  
firmed.

Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn  
What creatures there inhabit, of what mould  
Or substance, how endued, and what their  
power,

And where their weakness, how attempted best,  
By force or subtlety. Though Heaven be shut,  
And Heaven's high arbitrator sit secure  
In his own strength, this place may lie  
exposed, 360

The utmost border of his kingdom, left  
To their defence who hold it. Here perhaps  
Some advantageous act may be achieved  
By sudden onset; either with Hell-fire

To waste his whole creation, or possess  
All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,  
The puny habitants; or, if not drive,  
Seduce them to our party, that their God  
May prove their foe, and with repenting hand  
Abolish his own works. This would surpass 370  
Common revenge, and interrupt his joy  
In our confusion, and our joy up-raise  
In his disturbance; when his darling sons,  
Hurled headlong to partake with us, shall curse  
Their frail original and faded bliss,  
Faded so soon. Advise, if this be worth  
Attempting, or to sit in darkness here  
Hatching vain empires."—Thus Beëlzebub  
Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devised  
By Satan, and in part proposed; for whence, 380  
But from the author of all ill, could spring  
So deep a malice, to confound the race  
Of mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell  
To mingle and involve, done all to spite  
The great Creator? but their spite still serves  
His glory to augment. The bold design  
Pleased highly those infernal States, and joy  
Sparkled in all their eyes. With full assent  
They vote; whereat his speech he thus renewes:  
"Well have ye judged; well ended long  
debate,  
Synod of Gods! and, like to what ye are, 390

Great things resolved, which from the lowest  
Deep

Will once more lift us up, in spite of Fate,  
Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view  
Of those bright confines, whence, with neigh-  
boring arms

And opportune excursion, we may chance  
Re-enter Heaven; or else in some mild zone  
Dwell, not unvisited of Heaven's fair light,  
Secure, and at the brightening orient beam  
Purge off this gloom: the soft delicious air, 400  
To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,  
Shall breathe her balm. But first, whom shall we  
send

In search of this new world? whom shall we find  
Sufficient? who shall tempt, with wandering feet,  
The dark unbottomed infinite abyss,  
And through the palpable obscure find out  
His uncouth way, or spread his airy flight,  
Upborne with indefatigable wings  
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive  
The happy isle? What strength, what art, can  
then

Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe 410  
Through the strict sentinels and stations thick  
Of Angels watching round? Here he had need  
All circumspection, and we now no less  
Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send

The weight of all, and our last hope, relies."

This said, he sat; and expectation held  
His look suspense, awaiting who appeared  
To second, or oppose, or undertake  
The perilous attempt; but all sat mute,      420  
Pondering the danger with deep thoughts, and  
each

In other's countenance read his own dismay,  
Astonished. None, among the choice and prime  
Of those Heaven-warring champions, could be  
found

So hardy as to proffer or accept  
Alone the dreadful voyage; till at last  
Satan, whom now transcendent glory raised  
Above his fellows, with monarchal pride,  
Conscious of highest worth, unmoved thus spake:

"O Progeny of Heaven, emporeal Thrones! 430  
With reason hath deep silence and demur  
Seized us, though undismayed. Long is the  
way

And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light;  
Our prison strong; this huge convex of fire,  
Outrageous to devour, immures us round  
Ninefold, and gates of burning adamant  
Barred over us prohibit all egress.  
These passed, if any pass, the void profound  
Of unessential Night receives him next,  
Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being      440

Threatens him, plunged in that abortive gulf,  
If thence he 'scape, into whatever world  
Or unknown region, what remains him less  
Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?  
But I should ill become this throne, O Peers,  
And this imperial sovranity, adorned  
With splendor, armed with power, if aught pro-  
posed

And judged of public moment, in the shape  
Of difficulty or danger, could deter  
Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume 450  
These royalties, and not refuse to reign,  
Refusing to accept as great a share  
Of hazard as of honour, due alike  
To him who reigns, and so much to him due  
Of hazard more, as he above the rest  
High honored sits? Go therefore, mighty  
Powers,

Terror of Heaven, though fallen! intend at home,  
While here shall be our home, what best may  
ease

The present misery and render Hell  
More tolerable; if there be cure or charm 460  
To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain  
Of this ill mansion. Intermit no watch  
Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad  
Through all the coast of dark destruction seek  
Deliverance for us all. This enterprise

None shall partake with me." — Thus saying rose  
The monarch and prevented all reply,  
Prudent, lest from his resolution raised,  
Others among the chief might offer now—  
Certain to be refused—what erst they feared; 470  
And, so refused, might in opinion stand  
His rivals, winning cheap the high repute  
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But  
they

Dreaded not more the adventure than his voice  
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose.  
Their rising all at once was as the sound  
Of thunder heard remote. Toward him they  
bend  
With awful reverence prone; and as a God  
Extol him equal to the Highest in Heaven.  
Nor failed they to express how much they  
praised 480

That for the general safety he despised  
His own; for neither do the Spirits damned  
Lose all their virtue, lest men should boast  
Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites  
Or close ambition varnished o'er with zeal.

Thus they their doubtful consultations dark  
Ended, rejoicing in their matchless chief.  
As when from mountain-tops the dusky clouds  
Ascending, while the North-wind sleeps, o're-  
spread

Heaven's cheerful face, the lowering element 490  
Scowls o'er the darkened landscape snow, or  
shower,

If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet  
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,  
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds  
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.

Oh, shame to men! Devil with devil damned  
Firm concord holds, men only disagree

• Of creatures rational, though under hope  
Of heavenly grace; and, God proclaiming peace 500  
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife  
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,  
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:  
As if— which might induce us to accord—  
Man had not hellish foes enow besides,  
That day and night for his destruction wait.

The Stygian council thus dissolved; and forth  
In order came the grand infernal peers;  
Midst came their mighty paramount, and seemed  
Alone the antagonist of Heaven, nor less  
Than Hell's dread emperor, with pomp su-  
preme 510

And godlike imitated state. Him round  
A globe of fiery Seraphim enclosed,  
With bright emblazonry and horrent arms.  
Then of their session ended they bid cry,  
With trumpets' regal sound, the great result.

Toward the four winds four speedy Cherubim  
Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy  
By haralds' voice explained; the hollow Abyss  
Heard far and wide, and all the host of Hell  
With deafening shout returned them loud ac-  
claim,

520

Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat  
raised

By false presumptuous hope, the ranged Powers  
Disband, and, wandering, each his several way  
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice  
Leads him perplexed, where he may likeliest find  
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain  
The irksome hours till his great chief return.  
Part, on the plain or in the air sublime,  
Upon the wing or in swift race contend,  
As at the Olympian games or Pythian  
fields;

530

Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal  
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigads form:  
As when, to warn proud cities, war appears  
Waged in the troubled sky, and armies rush  
To battle in the clouds; before each van  
Prick forth the aerly knights, and couch their  
spears  
Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms  
From either end of heaven the welkin burns.  
Others, with vast Typhœan rage, more fell

Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the  
air

540

In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar.  
As when Alcides, from Æchalia crowned  
With conquest, felt the envenomed robe, and  
tore

Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,  
And Lichas from the top of Æta threw  
Into the Euboïc sea. Others more mild,

Retreated in a silent valley, sing  
With notes angelical to many a harp  
Their own heroic deeds, and hapless fall  
By doom of battle; and complain that Fate 550  
Free Virtue should enthrall to Force or Chance.  
Their song was partial, but the harmony  
—What could it less when Spirits immortal  
sing?—

Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment  
The thronging audience. In discourse more  
sweet.

—For eloquence the soul, song charms the  
sense—

Others apart sat on a hill retired,  
In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high  
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate;  
Fixed faith, free will, foreknowledge abso-  
lute,

560

And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.

Of good and evil much they argued then,  
Of happiness and final misery,  
Passion and apathy, and glory and shame—  
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy!  
Yet, with a pleasing sorcery, could charm  
Pain for awhile or anguish, and excite  
Fallacious hope, or arm the obdured breast  
With stubborn patience as with triple steel.  
Another part, in squadrons and gross bands, 570  
On bold adventure to discover wide  
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps  
Might yield them easier habitation, bend  
Four ways their flying march, along the banks  
Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge  
Into the burning lake their baleful streams;  
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;  
Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;  
Cocytus, named of lamentation loud  
Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlege-  
ton 580  
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.  
Far off from these a slow and silent stream,  
Lethè, the river of oblivion, rolls  
Her watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks  
Forthwith his former state and being forgets,  
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain,  
Beyond this flood a frozen continent  
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms

Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land  
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin  
seems

590

Of ancient pile, all else deep snow and ice;  
A gulf profound, as that Serbonian bog  
Betwixt Damiata and mount Casius old,  
Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air  
Burns frore, and cold performs the effect of fire.  
Thither, by harpy-footed Furies haled,  
At certain revolutions, all the damned  
Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change  
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more  
fierce,

From beds of raging fire, to starve in ice 600  
Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine,  
Immovable, infixed, and frozen round,  
Periods of time; thence hurried back to fire.  
They ferry over this Lethear sound,  
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,  
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach  
The tempting stream, with one small drop to  
lose

In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,  
All in one moment, and so near the brink.  
But Fate withstands, and, to oppose the attempt,  
Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards 611  
The ford, and of itself the water flies  
All taste of living wight, as once it fled

The lips of Tantalus. Thus roving on,  
In confused march forlorn, the adventurous  
bands,  
With shuddering horror pale and eyes aghast,  
Viewed first their lamentable lot, and found  
No rest. Through many a dark and dreary vale  
They passed, and many a region dolorous,  
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp,        620  
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades  
of death;  
A universe of death, which God by curse  
Created evil, for evil only good,  
Where all life dies, death lives, and Nature  
breeds,  
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,  
Abominable, inutterable, and worse  
Titan fables yet have feigned or fear conceived,  
Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras dire.  
Meanwhile the Adversary of God and Man,  
Satan, with thoughts inflamed of highest  
design,    630  
Puts on swift wings, and toward the gates of  
Hell  
Explores his solitary flight. Sometimes  
He scours the right-hand coast, sometimes the  
left;  
Now shaves with level wing the deep; then soars  
Up to the fiery concave, towering high.

As when far off at sea a fleet descried  
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds  
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles  
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring  
Their spicy drugs; they on the trading flood, 640  
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape,  
Ply stemming nightly toward the pole: so seemed  
Far off the flying Fiend. At last appear  
Hell-bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof,

- And thrice threefold, the gates; threefolds were  
brass,

Three iron, three of adamantine rock,  
Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire,  
Yet unconsumed. Before the gates there sat  
On either side a formidable shape;  
The one seemed woman to the waist, and fair, 650  
But ended foul in many a scaly fold,  
Voluminous and vast, a serpent armed  
With mortal sting. About her middle round  
A cry of hell hounds never ceasing barked  
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung  
A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,  
If aught disturbed their noise, into her womb,  
And kennel there, yet there still barked and  
howled

- Within unseen. Far less abhorred than these  
Vexed Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts 660  
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore;

Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, called  
In secret, riding through the air she comes,  
Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance  
With Lapland witches, while the labouring moon  
Eclipses at their charms. The other shape—  
If shape it might be called that shape had none  
Distinguishable in member, joint or limb,  
Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,  
For each seemed either—black it stood as  
Night,

670 •

Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,  
And shook a dreadful dart; what seemed his head  
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.  
Satan was now at hand, and from his seat  
The monster moving onward came as fast  
With horrid strides; Hell trembled as he strode.  
The undaunted Fiend what this might be  
admired,

Admired, not feared—God and his Son except,  
Created thing nought valued he nor shunned—  
And with disdainful look thus first began: 68c

"Whence and what art thou, execrable shape!  
That darest, though grim and terrible, advance  
Thy miscreated front athwart my way  
To yonder gate? Through them I mean to

pass—

That be assured—without leave asked of thee.  
Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,

Hell-born! not to contend with Spirits of Heaven."

To whom the Goblin full of wrath replied:  
"Art thou that traitor Angel? art thou he,  
Who first broke peace in Heaven, and faith till  
then

Unbroken, and, in proud rebellious arms, 691  
Drew after him the third part of Heaven's sons,  
Conjured against the Highest? for which both  
thou

And they, outcast from God, are here condemned  
To waste eternal days in woe and pain.

And reckonest thou thyself with Spirits of  
Heaven,

Hell-doomed! and breathest defiance here and  
scorn,

Where I reign king, and, to enrage thee more,  
Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment!  
False fugitive! and to thy speed add wings, 700  
Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue  
Thy lingering, or with one stroke of this dart  
Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt be-  
fore."

So spake the grisly Terror, and in shape  
So speaking and so threatening, grew tenfold  
More dreadful and deform. On the other side,  
Incensed with indignation, Satan stood  
Unterrified, and like a comet burned,

That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge,  
In the artic sky, und from his horrid hair 710  
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head  
Levelled his deadly aim; their fatal hands  
No second stroke intend; and such a frown  
Each cast at the other, as when the two black  
    clouds,

With heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on  
Over the Caspian, then stand front to front,  
Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow  
To join their dark encounter in mid air:  
So frowned the mighty combatants, that Hell  
Grew darker at their frown; so matched they  
    stood;

For never but once more was either like 721  
To meet so great a foe. And now great deeds  
Had been achieved, whereof all Hell had rung,  
Had not the snaky Sorceress, that sat  
Fast by Hell-gate and kept the fatal key,  
Risen, and with hideous outcry rushed between.

"O father, what intends thy hand, she cried,  
Against thy only son? What fury, O son,  
Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart  
Against thy father's head? and knowest for  
    whom;

For him who sits above, and laughs the  
    while 731  
At thee ordained his drudge, to execute

Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice,  
bids;—

His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both!"'

He spake, and at her words the hellish Pest  
Forbore, then these to her Satan returned:

"So strange thy outcry, and thy words so  
strange

Thou interposest, that my sudden hand,  
Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds

What it intends, till first I know of thee      740  
What thing thou art, thus double-formed, and  
why,

In this infernal vale first met, thou callest  
Me father, and that phantasm callest my son.

I know thee not, nor ever saw till now  
Sight more detestable than him and thee."

To whom thus the portress of Hell-gate re-  
plied:

"Hast thou forgotten me then?\* and do I seem  
Now in thine eye so foul? once deemed so fair  
In Heaven; when at the assembly, and in sight  
Of all the Seraphim, with thee combined      750  
In bold conspiracy against Heaven's King,  
All on a sudden miserable pain

Surprised thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum  
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast  
Threw forth; till, on the left side opening wide,  
Likest to thee in shape and countenance bright,

Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess armed,  
Out of thy head I sprung. Amazement seized  
All the host of Heaven; back they recoiled afraid  
At first, and called me Sin, and for a sign 760  
Portentous held me; but familiar grown  
I pleased, and with attractive graces won  
The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft  
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing  
Becamest enamoured, and such joy thou tookest  
With me in secret, that my womb conceived  
A growing burden. Meanwhile war arose,  
And fields were fought in Heaven, wherein  
remained

—For what could else?—to our almighty Foe  
Clear victory, to our part loss and rout 770  
Through all the Empyrean. Down they fell,  
Driven headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down  
Into this Deep, and in the general fall  
I also; at which time this powerful key  
Into my hand was given, with charge to keep  
These gates for ever shut, which none can pass  
Without my opening. Pensive here I sat,  
Alone; but long I sat not, till my womb,  
Pregnant by thee and now excessive grown,  
Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes. 780  
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,  
Thine own begotten, breaking violent away,

Tore through my entrails, that, with fear and  
    pain

Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew  
Transformed: but he, my inbred enemy,  
Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart,  
Made to destroy. I fled, and cried out *Death!*  
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sighed  
From all her caves, and back resounded *Death!*  
I fled, but he pursued—though more, it  
    seems,

790

- Inflamed with lust than rage—and, swifter far,  
Me overtook, his mother, all dismayed,  
And, in embraces forcible and foul  
Ingendering with me, of that rape begot  
These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry  
Surround me, as thou sawest, hourly conceived  
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite  
To me; for, when they list, into the womb  
That bred them they return, and howl and gnaw  
My bowels, their repast; then, bursting forth 800  
Afresh, with conscious terrors vex me round,  
That rest or intermission none I find.  
Before mine eyes in opposition sits  
Grim Death, my son and foe, who sets them on,  
And me his parent would full soon devour,  
For want of other prey, but that he knows  
His end with mine involved, and knows that I  
Should prove a bitter morsel and his bane,

Whenever that shall be; so Fate pronounced.  
But thou, O father, I forewarn thee, shun 810  
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope  
To be invulnerable in those bright arms,  
Though tempered heavenly; for that mortal dint,  
Save he who reigns above, none can resist."

She finished, and the subtle Fiend his lore  
Soon learned, now milder, and thus answered  
smooth:

"Dear daughter—since thou claimest me for thy  
sire,

And my fair son here shewest me, the dear  
pledge

Of Dalliance had with thee in Heaven, and joys  
Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire  
change

Befallen us, unforseen, unthought of—know, 821  
I come no enemy, but to set free

From out this dark and dismal house of pain,  
Both him and thee, and all the heavenly host  
Of Spirits, that, in our just pretences armed,  
Fell with us from on high. From them I go  
This uncouth errand, sole, and one for all  
Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread  
The unfounded Deep, and, through the Void  
immense

To search with wandering quest a place fore-  
told

Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now  
Created vast and round, a place of bliss  
In the purlieus of Heaven, and therein placed  
A race of upstart creatures, to supply  
Perhaps our vacant room, though more removed,  
Lest Heaven, surcharged with potent multitude,  
Might hap to move new broils. Be this or aught  
Than this more secret now designed, I haste  
To know; and, this once known, shall soon re-  
turn

And bring ye to the place where thou and Death  
Shall dwell at ease, and up and down un-  
seen

841

Wing silently the buxom air, embalmed  
With odours. There ye shall be fed and filled  
Immeasurably; all things shall be your prey."

He ceased, for both seemed highly pleased, and  
Death

Grinned horrible a ghastly smile, to hear  
His famine should be filled, and blessed his maw  
Destined to that good hour. No less rejoiced  
His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire:

"The key of this infernal pit, by due 850  
And by command of Heaven's all-powerful King,  
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock  
These adamantine gates; against all force  
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,  
Fearless to be o'ermatched by living might.

But what owe I to his commands above,  
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down  
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,  
To sit in hateful office here confined,  
Inhabitant of Heaven and heavenly born,      860  
Here in perpetual agony and pain,  
With terrors and with clamours compassed round  
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?  
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou  
My being gavest me; whom should I obey  
But thee? whom follow? Thou wilt bring me  
soon

To that new world of light and bliss, among  
The Gods who live at ease, where I shall reign  
At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems  
Thy daughter and thy darling, without  
end."      870

Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,  
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;  
And, toward the gate rolling her bestial train,  
Forthwith the huge portcullis high up-drew,  
Which but herself not all the Stygian Powers  
Could once have moved; then in the keyhole  
turns

The intricate wards, and every bolt and bar  
Of massy iron or solid rock with ease  
Unfastens. On a sudden open fly,  
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,      880

The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate  
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook  
Of Erebus. She opened, but to shut  
Excelled her power; the gates wide open stood,  
That with extended wings a bannered host,  
Under spread ensigns marching, might pass  
through

With horse and chariots ranked in loose array;  
So wide they stood, and like a furnace mouth  
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.

Before their eyes in sudden view appear 890  
The secrets of the hoary Deep, a dark,  
Illimitable ocean, without bound,  
Without dimension, where length, breadth, and  
highth,  
And time and place, are lost; where eldest Night  
And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold  
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise  
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.  
For Hot, Cold, Moist, and Dry, four champions  
fierce,  
Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring  
Their embryon atoms: they around the flag 900  
Of each his faction, in their several clans,  
Light-armed or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or  
slow,  
Swarm populous, unnumbered as the sands  
Of Barca or Cyrenè's torrid soil,

Levied to side with warring winds, and poise  
Their lighter wings. To whom these most  
adhere

He rules a moment; Chaos umpire sits,  
And by decision more embroils the fray,  
By which he reigns; next him high arbiter  
Chance govern all. Into this wild Abyss 910  
—The womb of Nature and perhaps her grave,  
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,  
But all these in their pregnant causes mixed  
Confusedly, and which thus must ever fight,  
Unless the almighty Maker them ordain  
His dark materials to create more worlds—  
Into this wild Abyss the wary Fiend  
Stood on the brink of Hell and looked awhile,  
Pondering his voyage; for no narrow frith  
He had to cross. Nor was his ear less pealed 920  
With noises loud and ruinous—to compare  
Great things with small—than when Bellona  
storms  
With all her battering engines, bent to rase  
Some capital city; or less than if this frame  
Of heaven were falling, and these elements  
In mutiny had from her axle torn  
The steadfast earth. At last his sail-broad vans  
He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke  
Up-lifted spurns the ground; thence many a  
league,

As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides                    930  
Audacious; but, the seat soon failing, meets  
A vast vacuity. All unawares,  
Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb-down he  
drops

Ten thousand fathom deep, and to this hour  
Down had been falling, had not by ill chance  
The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,  
Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him  
As many miles aloft. That fury stayed—  
Quenched in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea  
Nor good dry land—nigh foundered on he  
fares,    940

Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,  
Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.  
As when a gryphon, through the wilderness  
With winged course, o'r hill or moory dale,  
Pursues the Arimaspians, who by stealth  
Had from his wakeful custody purloined  
The guarded gold: so eagerly the Fiend  
O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense,  
or rare,

With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his  
way,

And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies.

At length a universal hubbub wild                    951  
Of stunning sounds and voices all confused,  
Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear

With loudest vehemence. Thither he plies,  
Undaunted, to meet there whatever Power  
Or Spirit of the nethermost Abyss  
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask  
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies  
Bordering on light; when straight behold the  
throne

Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread      960  
Wide on the wasteful Deep! With him enthroned  
Set Sable-vested Night, eldest of things,  
The consort of his reign; and by them stood  
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name  
Of Demogorgon; Rumor next and Chance,  
And Tumult and Confusion all embroiled,  
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.

To whom Satan turning boldly, thus: "Ye  
Powers

And Spirits of this nethermost Abyss,  
Chaos and ancient Night! I come no spy,      970  
With purpose to explore or to disturb  
The secrets of your realm; but, by constraint,  
Wandering this darksome desert, as my way  
Lies through your spacious empire up to light,  
Alone and without guide, half lost, I seek  
What readiest path leads where your gloomy  
bounds

Confine with Heaven; or if some other place,  
From your dominion won, the ethereal King

Possesses lately, thither to arrive  
I travel this profound. Direct my course. 980  
Directed no mean recompense it brings  
To your behoof: if I that region lost,  
All usurpation thence expelled, reduce  
To her original darkness and your sway—  
Which is my present journey—and once more  
Erect the standard there of ancient Night,  
Yours be the advantage all, mine the revenge!"

Thus Satan, and him thus the Anarch old,  
With faltering speech and visage incomposed,  
Answered: "I know thee, stranger, who thou  
art,

That mighty leading Angel, who of late 991  
Made head against Heaven's King, though over-  
thrown.

I saw and heard; for such a numerous host  
Fled not in silence through the frighted Deep,  
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,  
Confusion worse confounded; and Heaven-gates  
Poured out by millions her victorious bands  
Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here  
Keep residence; if all I can will serve,  
That little which is left so to defend, 1000  
Encroached on still through your intestine broils,  
Weakening the sceptre of old Night. First Hell,  
Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;  
Now lately heaven and earth, another world,

Hung o'er my realm, linked in a golden chain  
To that side Heaven from whence your legions  
fell.

If that way be your walk, you have not far;  
So much the nearer danger. Go and speed!  
Havoc, and spoil, and ruin are my gain."

He ceased, and Satan stayed not to reply,   1010  
But, glad that now his sea should find a shore,  
With fresh alacrity and force renewed,  
Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,  
Into the wild expanse, and through the shock  
Of fighting elements, on all sides round  
Environed, wins his way; harder beset  
And more endangered, than when Argo passed  
Through Bosporus, betwixt the justling Rocks;  
Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunned  
Charybdis, and by the other Whirlpool  
steered:   1020

So he with difficulty and labour hard  
Moved on: with difficulty and labour he;  
But, he once past, soon after when Man fell—  
Strange alteration!—Sin and Death amain  
Following his track, such was the will of Heaven,  
Paved after him a broad and beaten way  
Over the dark Abyss, whose boiling gulf  
Tamely endured a bridge of wondrous length,  
From Hell continued, reaching the utmost orb

Of this frail World; by which the Spirits  
perverse,

With easy intercourse, pass to and fro      1031  
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom  
God and good Angels guard by special grace.

But now at last the sacred influence  
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heaven  
Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night  
A glimmering dawn. Here Nature first begins  
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire,  
As from her outmost works, a broken foe,  
With tumult less and with less hostile din;      1040  
That Satan, with less toil, and now with ease,  
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light;  
And, like a weather-beaten vessel, holds  
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn.  
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air,  
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold  
Far off the empyreal Heaven, extended wide  
In circuit, undetermined square or round,  
With opal towers and battlements adorned  
Of living sapphire, once his native seat;

And fast by, hanging in a golden chain,  
This pendent World, in bigness as a star  
Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.

Thither, full fraught with mischievous revenge,  
Accursed, and in a cursed hour, he hies.

# PARADISE LOST.

## BOOK III.

### THE ARGUMENT.

God, sitting on his throne, sees Satan flying toward this World, then newly created: shews him to the Son, who sat at his right hand; foretells the success of Satan in perverting mankind; clears his own justice and wisdom from all imputation, having created man free and able enough to have withstood his tempter; yet declares his purpose of grace toward him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduced. The Son of God renders praises to his Father for the manifestation of his gracious purpose toward man; but God again declares, that grace cannot be extended toward man without the satisfaction of Divine justice; man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to Godhead, and therefore with all his progeny devoted to death must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransom for man: the Father accepts him, ordains his Incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in Heaven and Earth; commands all the angels to adore him; they obey, and hymning to their harps in full quire, celebrate the Father and the Son. Meanwhile Satan alights upon the bare convex of this World's uttermost orb; where wandering he first finds a place, since called the Limbo of Vanity; what persons and things fly up thither; thence comes to the gate of Heaven, described ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it: his passage thence to the orb

of the sun; he finds there Uriel the regent of that orb, but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner angel; and pretending a zealous desire to behold the new creation, and Man whom God had placed here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed; alights first on mount Niphates.

HAIL, holy Light, offspring of Heaven first-born!

Or of the Eternal coeternal beam

May I express thee unblamed? since God is light,

And never but in unapproached light

Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,

Bright effluence of bright essence, increase!

Or hearest thou rather pure ethereal stream,

Whose fountain who shall tell? before the sun,

Before the heaven thou wert, and at the voice

Of God, as with a mantle didst invest

10

The rising World of waters dark and deep,

Won from the void and formless Infinite.—

Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,

Escaped the Stygian pool, though long detained

In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight,

Through utter and through middle darkness borne,

With other notes than to the Orphean lyre,

I sung of Chaos and eternal Night;

Taught by the heavenly Muse to venture down

The dark descent, and up to re-ascend,

20

Though hard and rare;—thee I revisit safe,  
And feel thy sovran vital lamp; but thou  
Revisitest not these eyes, that roll in vain  
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;  
So thick a drop serene hath quenched their orbs,  
Or dim suffusion veiled. Yet not the more  
Cease I, to wander where the Muses haunt  
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,  
Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief  
Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath, 30.  
That wash thy hallowed feet, and warbling flow,  
Nightly I visit; nor sometimes forget  
Those other two equalled with me in fate,  
So were I equalled with them in renown,  
Blind Thamyris and blind Maeonides,  
And Tiresias and Phineus, prophets old:  
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move  
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird  
Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid  
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the  
year 40

Seasons return, but not to me returns  
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,  
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,  
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;  
But cloud instead and ever-during dark  
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men  
Cut off, and, for the book of knowledge fair,

Presented with a universal blank  
Of Nature's works, to me expunged and raised,  
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out. 50  
So much the rather thou, celestial Light,  
Shine inward, and the mind through all her  
powers

Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence  
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell  
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

Now had the Almighty Father from above,  
From the pure Empyrean where he sits,  
High thronged above all highth, bent down his  
eye,

His own works and their works at once to view.  
About him all the Sanctities of Heaven 60  
Stood thick as stars, and from his sight received  
Beatitude past utterance; on his right  
The radiant image of his glory sat,  
His only Son. On earth he first beheld  
Our two first parents, yet the only two  
Of mankind, in the Happy Garden placed,  
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,  
Uninterrupted joy, unrivalled love,  
In blissful solitude. He then surveyed  
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there 70  
Coasting the wall of Heaven on this side Night,  
In the dun air sublime, and ready now  
To stoop, with wearied wings and willing feet,

On the bare outside of this World, that seemed  
Firm land embosomed, without firmament,  
Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.

Him God beholding from his prospect high,  
Wherein past, present, future, he beholds,  
Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake:

“Only-begotten Son, seest thou what rage 80  
Transports our Adversary? whom no bounds  
Prescribed, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains  
Heaped on him there, nor yet the main Abyss  
Wide interrupt, can hold; so bent he seems  
On desperate revenge, that shall redound  
Upon his own rebellious head. And now,  
Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his  
way

Not far off Heaven, in the precincts of light,  
Directly toward the new-created World,  
And Man there placed, with purpose to  
assay 90

If him by force he can destroy, or worse,  
By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert;  
For man will hearken to his glozing lies,  
And easily transgress the soul command,  
Sole pledge of his obedience; so will fall  
He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?  
Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me  
All he could have. I made him just and right,  
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.

Such I created all the ethereal Powers      100  
And Spirits, both them who stood and them who  
failed;

Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.  
Not free, what proof could they have given  
sincere

Of true allegiance, constant faith, or love,  
Where only what they needs must do appeared,  
Not what they would? what praise could they  
receive?

What pleasure I from such obedience paid?  
When will and reason—reason also is choice—  
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoiled,  
Made passive both, had served necessity,      110  
Not me. They therefore, as to right belonged,  
So were created, nor can justly accuse  
Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,  
As if Predestination overruled  
Their will, disposed by absolute decree,  
Or high foreknowledge. They themselves  
decreed

Their own revolt, not I. If I foreknew,  
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,  
Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.  
So, without least impulse or shadow of fate.      120  
Or aught by me immutably foreseen,  
They trespass, authors to themselves in all,

Both what they judge and what they choose; for  
so

I formed them free, and free they must remain,  
Till they enthrall themselves; I else must change  
Their nature, and revoke the high decree  
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordained  
Their freedom; they themselves ordained their  
fall

The first sort by their own suggestion fell,  
Self-tempted, self-depraved; Man falls, de-  
ceived

130

By the other first: Man therefore shall find grace,  
The other none. In mercy and justice both,  
Through Heaven and Earth, so shall my glory  
excel;

But mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine."

Thus while God spake ambrosial fragrance  
filled

All Heaven, and in the blessed Spirits elect  
Sense of new joy ineffable diffused.

Beyond compare the Son of God was seen  
Most glorious: in him all his father shone  
Substantially expressed; and in his face

140

Divine compassion visibly appeared,  
Love without end, and without measure grace,  
Which uttering thus he to his Father spake:

"O Father, gracious was that word which  
closed

Thy sovran sentence, that Man should find  
grace;  
For which both Heaven and Earth shall high  
extol  
Thy praises, with the innumerable sound  
Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy  
throne  
Encompassed shall resound thee ever blest.  
For should Man finally be lost, should Man, 150  
Thy creature late so loved, thy youngest son,  
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though joined  
With his own folly . . . that be from thee far,  
That far be from thee, Father, who art judge  
Of all things made, and judgest only right.  
Or shall the Adversary thus obtain  
His end; and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil  
His malice, and thy goodness bring to nought;  
Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,  
Yet with revenge accomplished, and to Hell 160  
Draw after him the whole race of mankind,  
By him corrupted? or wilt thou thyself  
Abolish thy creation, and unmake  
For him what for thy glory thou hast made? . . .  
So should thy goodness and thy greatness both  
Be questioned and blasphemed without defence.”  
To whom the great Creator thus replied:  
“ O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,  
Son of my bosom, Son, who art alone

My word, my wisdom, and effectual might,      170  
All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all  
As my eternal purpose hath decreed.

Man shall not quite be lost, but saved who will;  
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me  
Freely vouchsafed; once more I will renew  
His lapsed powers, though forfeit and enthralled  
By sin to foul exorbitant desires;  
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand  
On even ground against his mortal foe;  
By me upheld, that he may know how frail      180  
His fallen condition is, and to me owe  
All his deliverance, and to none but me.

Some I have chosen of peculiar grace,  
Elect above the rest—so is my will;  
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warned  
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes  
The incensed Deity, while offered grace  
Invites; for I will clear their senses dark,  
What may suffice, and soften stony hearts  
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.      190  
To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,  
Though but endeavored with sincere intent,  
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.  
And I will place within them as a guide  
My umpire Conscience, whom if they will hear,  
Light after light, well used, they shall attain,  
And to the end persisting safe arrive.

This my long sufferance and my day of grace  
They who neglect and scorn shall never taste;  
But hard be hardened, blind be blinded more, 205  
That they may stumble on and deeper fall;  
And none but such from mercy I exclude.—  
But yet all is not done; Man disobeying,  
Disloyal, breaks his fealty, and sins  
Against the high supremacy of Heaven,  
Affecting Godhead, and, so losing all,  
To expiate his treason hath nought left,  
But, to destruction sacred and devote,  
He with his whole posterity must die,  
Die he or justice must; unless for him 210  
Some other able, and as willing, pay  
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.  
Say, heavenly Powers, where shall we find such  
love?

Which of ye will be mortal, to redeem  
Man's mortal crime, and just the unjust to save?  
Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?"

He asked, but all the heavenly quire stood  
mute,  
And silence was in Heaven: on Man's behalf  
Patron or intercessor none appeared,  
Much less than durst upon his own head  
draw 220  
The deadly forfeiture and ransom set.  
And now without redemption all mankind

Must have been lost, adjudged to Death and  
Hell

By doom severe, had not the Son of God,  
In whom the fulness dwells of love divine,  
His dearest mediation thus renewed:

"Father, thy word is passed, Man shall find  
grace;

And shall Grace not find means, that find her  
way,

The speediest of thy winged messengers,  
To visit all thy creatures, and to all 230

Comes unprepared, unimplored, unsought?

Happy for man so coming! he her aid  
Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost;  
Atonement for himself or offering meet,  
Indebted and undone, hath none to bring.—

Behold me then: me for him, life for life  
I offer; on me let thine anger fall;  
Account me Man: I for his sake will leave  
Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee  
Freely put off, and for him lastly die, 240

Well pleased; on me let Death wreak all his rage.

Under his gloomy power I shall not long  
Lie vanquished; thou hast given me to possess  
Life in myself forever; by thee I live,  
Though now to Death I yield, and am his due,  
All that of me can die. Yet, that debt paid,  
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave,

His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul  
For ever with corruption there to dwell;  
But I shall rise victorious, and subdue      250  
My vanquisher, spoiled of his vaunted spoil.  
Death his death's wound shall then receive, and  
        stoop

Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarmed;  
I through the ample air, in triumph high,  
Shall lead Hell captive, maugre Hell, and shew  
• The powers of darkness bound: thou, at the sight  
Pleased, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,  
While, by the raised, I ruin all my foes,  
Death last, and with his carcase glut the grave;  
Then, with the multitude of my redeemed,      260  
Shall enter Heaven, long absent, and return,  
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud  
Of anger shall remain, but peace assured  
And reconciliation; wrath shall be no more  
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire."

His words here ended, but his meek aspect  
Silent yet spake, and breathed immortal love  
To mortal men, above which only shone  
Filial obedience; as a sacrifice  
Glad to be offered, he attends the will      270  
Of his great Father. Admiratio seized  
All Heaven, what this might mean, and whither  
tend,  
Wondering; but soon the Almighty thus replied:

"O thou in Heaven and Earth the only peace  
Found out for mankind under wrath! O thou  
My sole complacence! well thou knowest how  
dear.

To me are all my works, nor Man the least,  
Though last created; that for him I spare  
Thee from my bosom and right-hand, to save,  
By losing thee awhile, the whole race lost. 280  
Thou, therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,  
Their nature also to thy nature join;  
And be thyself Man among men on earth,  
Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed,  
By wondrous birth; be thou in Adam's room  
The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.  
As in him perish all men, so in thee,  
As from a second root, shall be restored  
As many as are restored, without thee none.  
His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit, 290  
Imputed; shall absolve them who renounce  
Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,  
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee  
Receive new life. So Man, as is most just,  
Shall satisfy for Man, be judged and die,  
And dying rise, and rising with him raise  
His brethren, ransomed with his own dear life.  
So heavenly love shall outdo hellish hate,  
Giving to death, and dying to redeem,  
So dearly to redeem what hellish hate 300

So easily destroyed, and still destroys  
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.  
Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume  
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.  
Because thou hast, though throned in highest  
bliss,

Equal to God, and equally enjoying  
Godlike fruition, quitted all, to save  
A world from utter loss, and hast been found  
By merit more than birthright Son of God,  
Found worthiest to be so by being good, 310  
Far more than great or high: because in thee  
Love hath abounded more than glory abound;  
Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt  
With thee thy manhood also to this throne:  
Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign  
Both God and man, Son both of God and Man,  
Anointed universal King. All power  
I give thee; reign for ever, and assume  
Thy merits; under thee, as head supreme,  
Thrones, Princedoms, Powers, Dominions, I  
reduce:

All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide 321  
In Heaven, on Earth, or under Earth in Hell.  
When thou, attended gloriously from Heaven,  
Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send  
The summoning Archangels, to proclaim  
Thy dread tribunal; forthwith from all winds

The living, and forthwith the cited dead,  
Of all past ages, to the general doom  
Shall hasten; such a peal shall rouse their sleep.  
Then, all thy Saints assembled, thou shalt  
judge

330

Bad men and Angels. They arraigned shall sink  
Beneath thy sentence; Hell, her numbers full,  
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Meanwhile  
The World shall burn, and from her ashes spring  
New heaven and earth, wherein the just shall  
dwell;

And, after all their tribulations long,  
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,  
With Joy and Love triumphing, and fair Truth.  
Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by,  
For regal sceptre then no more shall need; 340  
God shall be all in all. But, all ye Gods,  
Adore him, who to compass all this dies:  
Adore the Son, and honor him as me."

No sooner had the Almighty ceased, but, all  
The multitude of Angels—with a shout  
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet  
As from blest voices—uttering joy, Heaven rung  
With jubilee, and loud Hosannas filled  
The eternal regions. Lowly reverent  
Toward either throne they bow, and to the  
ground

With solemn adoration down they cast

351

Their crowns, inwove with amaran and gold;  
Immortal amaran, a flower which once  
In Paradise, fast by the Tree of Life,  
Began to bloom; but soon, for Man's offence,  
To Heaven removed, where first it grew, there  
grows

And flowers aloft shading the Fount of Life,  
And where the River of Bliss through midst of  
Heaven

Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream.

With these that never fade the Spirits elect 360  
Bind their resplendent locks, inwreathed with  
beams.

Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright  
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,  
Impurpled with celestial roses smiled.

Then, crowned again, their golden harps they  
took—

Harps ever tuned, that glittering by their side  
Like quivers hung—and with preamble sweet  
Of charming symphony they introduce  
Their sacred song, and waken raptures high;  
No voice exempt, no voice but well could join 370  
Melodious part, such concord is in Heaven.

Thee, Father, first they sung, omnipotent,  
Immutable, immortal, infinite,  
Eternal King; thee, Author of all being,  
Fountain of light, thyself invisible

Amidst the glorious brightness, where thou  
sittest

Throned inaccessible; but when thou shadest  
The full blaze of thy beams, and, through a cloud,  
Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine, . . .  
Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear, 380  
Yet dazzle Heaven, that brightest Seraphim  
Approach not, but with both wings veil their  
eyes.

The next they sang of all creation first,  
Begotten Son, divine similitude,  
In whose conspicuous contenance, without cloud  
Made visible, the almighty Father shines,  
Whom else no creature can behold; on thee  
Impressed the effulgence of his glory abides;  
Transfused on thee his ample Spirit rests.

"He Heaven of Heavens and all the powers  
therein

By thee created; and by thee threw down 391  
The aspiring Dominations. Thou that day  
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,  
Nor stop thy flaming chariot-wheels, that shook  
Heaven's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks  
Thou drovest of warring Angels disarrayed.  
Back from pursuit thy powers with loud acclaim  
Thee only extolled, Son of thy Father's might,  
To execute fierce vengeance on his foot.

Not so on man; him, through their malice  
fallen,

400

Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom  
So strictly, but much more to pity incline.

No sooner did thy dear and only Son  
Perceive thee purposed not to doom frail Man  
So strictly, but much more to pity inclined,  
He, to appease thy wrath and end the strife  
Of mercy and justice in thy face discerned,

• Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat  
Second to thee, offered himself to die  
For Man's offence. Oh, unexampled love, 410  
Love nowhere to be found less than Divine!  
Hail, Son of God, Saviour of men! thy name  
Shall be the copious matter of my song  
Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise  
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin."

Thus they in Heaven, above the starry sphere,  
Thei happy hours in joy and hymning spent.

Meanwhile upon the firm opacious globe  
Of this round World, whose first convex divides  
The luminous inferior orbs enclosed 420  
From Chaos and the inroad of Darkness old,  
Satan alighted walks. A globe far off  
It seemed, now seems a boundless continent,  
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night  
Starless exposed, and ever-threatening storms  
Of Chaos blustering round, inclement sky;

Save on that side which from the wall of Heaven,  
Though distant far, some small reflection gains  
Of glimmering air, less vexed with tempest loud:  
Here walked the Fiend at large in spacious  
field.

43<sup>o</sup>

As when a vulture on Imaüs bred,  
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,  
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey,  
To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling kids,  
On hills where flocks are fed, flies toward the  
springs

Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;  
But in his way lights on the barren plains  
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive  
With sails and wind their cany waggons light;  
So, on this windy sea of land, the Fiend      44<sup>o</sup>  
Walks up and down alone, bent on his prey;  
Alone, for other creature, in this place  
Living or lifeless, to be found was none;  
None yet, but store hereafter from the Earth  
Up hither like aërial vapors flew  
Of all things transitory and vain, when sin  
With vanity had filled the works of men:  
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things  
Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,  
Or happiness in this or the other life.      45<sup>o</sup>  
All who have their reward on earth, the fruits  
Of painful superstition and blind zeal,

Nought seeking but the praise of men. Here find  
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds.

All the unaccomplished works of Nature's hand,  
Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mixed,  
Dissolved on Earth, fleet hither, and in vain,  
Till final dissolution, wander here;  
Not in the neighboring moon, as some have  
dreamed;

Those argent fields more likely habitants, 460

Translated Saints or middle Spirits hold  
Betwixt the angelical and human kind.

Hither, of ill-joined sons and daughters born,  
First from the ancient world those Giants came,  
With many a vain exploit, though then re-  
nowned;

The builders next of Babel, on the plain  
Of Sennaar, and still with vain design  
New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:  
Others came single; he, to be deemed  
A god, leaped fondly into Ætna flames 470

Empedocles; and he who, to enjoy  
Plato's Elysium, leaped into the sea,  
Cleombrotus; and many more too long,  
Embryos and idiots, eremites and friars,  
White, black, and grey, with all their trumpery.  
Here pilgrims roam, that strayed so far to seek  
In Golgotha him dead who lives in Heaven;  
And they who, to be sure of Paradise,

Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,  
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguised. 480  
They pass the planets seven, and pass the fixed,  
And that crystalline sphere whose balance  
weighs

The trepidation talked, and that first moved;  
And now Saint Peter at Heaven's wicket seems  
To wait them with his keys, and now at foot  
Of Heaven's ascent they lift their feet, when lo!  
A violent cross-wind from either coast  
Blows them transverse, ten thousand leagues'  
awry,

Into the divious air. Then might ye see  
Cowls, hoods, and habits with their wearers,  
toss 490

And fluttered into rags; then reliques, beads,  
Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,  
The sport of winds; all these, upwhirled aloft,  
Fly o'er the backside of the World far off  
Into a Limbo large and broad, since called  
The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown  
I.ong after, now unpeopled and untrod.

All this dark globe the Fiend found as he  
passed,  
And long he wandered, till at last a gleam  
Of dawning light turned thitherward in  
haste 500  
His traveled steps. Far distant he descries,

Ascending by degrees magnificent  
Up to the wall of Heaven, a structure high;  
At top whereof, but far more rich, appeared  
The work as of a kingly palace-gate,  
With frontispiece of diamond and gold  
Embellished; thick with sparkling orient gems  
The portal shone, inimitable on Earth  
By model, or by shading pencil drawn.  
The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw 516  
Angels ascending and descending, bands  
Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled  
To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz  
Dreaming by night under the open sky,  
And waking cried, *This is the gate of Heaven.*  
Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood  
There always, but, drawn up to Heaven, some-  
times  
Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flowed  
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon  
Who after came from Earth sailing arrived 520  
Wafted by Angels, or flew o'er the lake  
Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.  
The stairs were then let down, whether to dare  
The Fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate  
His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss;  
Direct against which opened from beneath,  
Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,  
A passage down to the Earth, a passage wide;

Wider by far than that of after-times  
Over Mount Sion, and, though that were  
large, 530  
Over the Promised Land to God so dear;  
By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,  
On high behests his Angels to and fro  
Passed frequent, and his eye with choice regard  
From Paneas, the fount of Jordan's flood,  
To Beërsaba, where the Holy Land  
Borders on Egypt and the Arabian shore;  
So wide the opening seemed, where bounds were  
set

To darkness, such as bound the ocean-wave.

Satan from hence, now on the lower stair, 540  
That scaled by steps of gold to Heaven-gate,  
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view  
Of all this World at once. As when a scout,  
Through dark and desert ways with peril gone  
All night, at last by break of cheerful dawn  
Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,  
Which to his eye discovers unaware  
The goodly prospect of some foreign land,  
First seen, or some renowned metropolis,  
With glistering spires and pinnacles adorned, 550  
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams...  
Such wonder seized, though after Heaven seen,  
The Spirit malign, but much more envy seized,  
At sight of all this World beheld so fair.

Round he surveys—and well might, where he  
stood,

So high above the circling canopy  
Of Night's extended shade—from eastern point  
Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears  
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas,  
Beyond the horizon; then from pole to pole 561  
He views in breadth, and, without longer pause,  
Down right into the World's first region throws  
His flight precipitant, and winds with ease  
Through the pure marble air his oblique way  
Amongst innumerable stars, that shone  
Stars distant, but nigh-hand seemed other worlds,  
Or other worlds they seemed, or happy isles,  
Like those Hesperian gardens famed of old,  
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery vales,  
Thrice-happy isles; but who dwelt happy  
there

570

He stayed not to inquire. Above them all  
The golden sun, in splendor likest Heaven,  
Allured his eye. Thither his course he bends,  
Through the calm firmament—but up or down,  
By center or eccentric, hard to tell,  
Or longitude—where the great luminary,  
Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,  
That from his lordly eye keep distance due,  
Dispenses light from far. They, as they move  
Their starry dance in numbers that compute 580

Days, months, and years, toward his all-cheering  
lamp

Turn swift their various motions, or are turned  
By his magnetic beam, that gently warns  
The Universe, and to each inward part  
With gentle penetration, though unseen,  
Shoots invisible virtue even to the deep :  
So wonderfully was set his station bright.

There lands the Fiend, a spot like which  
perhaps

Astronomer in the sun's luscent orb,  
Through his glazed optic tube, yet never  
saw.

590

The place he found beyond expression bright,  
Compared with aught on Earth, metal or stone;  
Not all parts like, but all alike informed  
With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire:  
If metal, part seemed gold, part silver clear;  
If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,  
Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone  
In Aaron's breastplate, and a stone besides  
Imagined rather oft than elsewhere seen,  
That stone, or like to that, which here below 600  
Philosophers in vain so long have sought;  
In vain, though by their powerful art they bind  
Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound  
In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,  
Drained through a limbec to his native form.

What wonder then if fields and regions here  
Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run  
Potable gold, when, with one virtuous touch,  
The arch-chemic sun, so far from us remote,  
Produces, with terrestrial humor mixed, 61c  
Here in the dark so many precious things,  
Of colour glorious, and effect so rare !  
Here matter new to gaze the Devil met  
Undazzled. Far and wide his eye commands;  
For sight no obstacle found here nor shade,  
But all sunshine, as when his beams at noon  
Culminate from the equator, as they now  
Shot upward still direct, whence no way round  
Shadow from body opaque can fall; and the air,  
Nowhere so clear, sharpened his visual ray 620  
To objects distant far, whereby he soon  
Saw within ken a glorious Angel stand,  
The same whom John saw also in the sun.  
His back was turned, but not his brightness hid ;  
Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar  
Circled his head, nor less his locks behind  
Illustrious, on his shoulders fledge with wings,  
Lay waving round ; on some great charge  
employed  
He seemed, or fixed in cogitation deep.  
Glad was the spirit impure, as now in hope 630  
To find who might direct his wandering flight  
To Paradise, the happy seat of Man,

His journey's end and our beginning woe :  
But first he casts to change his proper shape,  
Which else might work him danger or delay.  
And now a stripling Cherub he appears,  
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face  
Youth smiled celestial, and to every limb  
Suitable grace diffused, so well he feigned.

Under a coronet his flowing hair 640

In curls on either cheek played; wings he wore  
Of many a colored plume, sprinkled with gold;  
His habit fit for speed succinct, and held  
Before his decent steps a silver wand.

He drew not nigh unheard; the Angel bright,  
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turned,  
Admonished by his ear, and straight was known  
The Archangel Uriel, one of the seven  
Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,  
Stand ready at command, and are his eyes 650  
That run through all the Heavens, or down to  
the Earth

Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,  
O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts:

"Uriel, for thou of those seven Spirits that  
stand  
In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,  
The first art wont his great authentic will  
Interpreter through highest Heaven to bring.  
Where all his sons the embassy attend;

And here are likeliest by supreme decree  
Like honor to obtain, and as his eye                    660  
To visit oft this new creation round . . .  
Unspeakable desire to see and know  
All these his wondrous works, but chiefly Man,  
His chief delight and favor, him for whom  
All these his works so wondrous he ordained,  
Had brought me from the quires of Cherubim,  
Alone thus wandering. Brightest Seraph, tell,  
In which of all these shining orbs hath Man  
His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,  
But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell;      670  
That I may find him, and with secret gaze  
Or open admiration him behold,  
On whom the great Creator hath bestowed  
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces  
poured;  
That both in him and all things, as in meet,  
The universal Maker we may praise;  
Who justly hath driven out his rebel foes  
To deepest Hell, and, to repair that loss,  
Created this new happy race of Men  
To serve him better: wise are all his  
ways.”    680

So spake the false dissembler unperceived;  
For neither man nor angel can discern  
Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks  
Invisible, except to God alone,

By his permissive will, through Heaven and Earth.

And oft, though Wisdom wake, Suspicion sleeps  
At Wisdom's gate, and to Simplicity  
Resigns her charge, while Goodness thinks no ill,  
Where no ill seems: which now for once beguiled  
Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held      690  
The sharpest-sighted Spirit of all in Heaven;  
Who in the fraudulent imposter foul,  
In his uprightness, answer thus returned:

"Fair Angel, thy desire, which tends to know  
The works of God, thereby to glorify  
The great Work-master, leads to no excess  
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise  
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither  
From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,  
To witness with thine eyes what some per-  
haps,      700

Contented with report, hear only in Heaven:  
For wonderful indeed are all his works,  
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all  
Had in remembrance, always with delight!  
But what created mind can comprehend  
Their number, or the wisdom infinite  
That brought them forth, but hid their causes  
deep?

I saw when at his word the formless mass,  
This World's material mould, came to a heap;

Confusion heard his voice, and wild Uproar 710  
Stood ruled, stood vast Infinitude confined;  
Till at his second bidding Darkness fled,  
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung.  
Swift to their several quarters hasted then  
The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire;  
And this ethereal quintessence of heaven  
Flew upward, spirited with various forms,  
That rolled orbicular, and turned to stars,  
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;  
Each had his place appointed, each his course: 720  
The rest in circuit walls this Universe.  
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side  
With light from hence, though but reflected,  
shines.

That place is Earth, the seat of Man; that light  
His day, which else, as the other hemisphere,  
Night would invade; but there the neighbouring  
    moon

—So call that opposite fair star—her aid  
Timely interposes, and, her monthly round  
Still ending, still renewing, through mid-heaven,  
With borrowed light her countenance triform 730  
Hence fills and empties, to enlighten the Earth,  
And in her pale dominion checks the night.  
That spot to which I point is Paradise,  
Adam's abode, those lofty shades his bower.  
Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires.”

Thus said, he turned; and Satan bowing low,  
As to superior Spirits is wont in Heaven,  
Where honor due and reverence none neglects,  
Took leave, and toward the coast of Earth beneath,  
Down from the ecliptic, sped with hoped  
success, 740  
Throws his steep flight in many an aer'y wheel,  
Nor stayed, till on Niphates' top he lights.

## PARADISE LOST.

### BOOK IV.

#### THE ARGUMENT.

SATAN now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprise which he undertook alone against God and Man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions, fear, envy, and despair; but at length confirms himself in evil, journeys on to Paradise, whose outward prospect and situation is described, overleaps the bounds, sits in the shape of a cormorant on the Tree of Life, as highest in the garden, to look about him. The garden described; Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve; his wonder at their excellent form and happy state, but with resolution to work their fall; overhears their discourse, thence gathers that the Tree of Knowledge was forbidden them to eat of under penalty of death; and thereon intends to found his temptation by seducing them to transgress: then leaves them awhile, to know further of their state by some other means. Meanwhile Uriel descending on a sunbeam warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil spirit had escaped the Deep, and passed at noon by his sphere in the shape of a good angel down to Paradise, discovered after by his furious gestures in the mount. Gabriel promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest: their bower described; their evening worship. Gabriel drawing forth his bands of nightwatch to walk the round of Paradise, appoints

two strong angels to Adam's bower, lest the Evil Spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping; there they find him at the ear of Eve, tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom questioned, he scornfully answers, prepares resistance, but, hindered by a sign from Heaven, flies out of Paradise.

OH for that warning voice, which he who saw  
The Apocalypse heard cry in Heaven aloud,  
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,  
Came furious down to be revenged on men,  
*Woe to the inhabitants on earth!* that now,  
While time was, our first parents had been  
warned

The coming of their secret foe, and 'scaped,  
Haply so 'scaped, his mortal snare. For now  
Satan, now first inflamed with rage, came down,  
The tempter ere the accuser of mankind,      10  
To wreak on innocent frail Man his loss  
Of that first battle, and his flight to Hell.  
Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold  
Far off and fearless; nor with cause to boast  
Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth  
Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,  
And like a devilish engine back recoils  
Upon himself. Horror and doubt distract  
His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir  
The hell within him; for within him hell      20  
He brings, and round about him, nor from hell  
One step, no more than from himself, can fly

By change of place. Now conscience wakes  
despair,

That slumbered, wakes the bitter memory  
Of what he was, what is, and what must be—  
Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must  
ensue.

Sometimes toward Eden, which now in his view  
Lay pleasant, his grieved look he fixes sad;  
Sometimes toward heaven and the full-blazing  
sun,

Which now sat high in his meridian tower; 30  
Then much revolving thus in sighs began:

‘O thou, that, with surpassing glory crowned,  
Lookest from thy sole dominion, like the God  
Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars  
Hide their diminished heads; to thee I call,  
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,  
O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams,  
That bring to my remembrance from what state  
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;  
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down, 40  
Warring in Heaven against Heaven’s matchless  
King.

Ab, wherefore? he deserved no such return  
From me, whom he created what I was,  
In that bright eminence, and with his good  
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.  
What could be less than to afford him praise,

The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks?  
How due! Yet all his good proved ill in me,  
And wrought but malice. Lifted up so high  
I 'sdei.ed subjection, and thought one step  
higher

50

Would set me highest, and in a moment quit  
The debt immense of endless gratitude,  
So burdensome still paying still to owe;  
Forgetful what from him I still received,  
And understood not that a grateful mind  
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once  
Indebted and discharged; what burden then?  
Oh, had his powerful destiny ordained  
Me some inferior Angel! I had stood  
Then happy; no unbounded hope had raised 60  
Ambition. Yet why not? some other Power  
As great might have aspired, and me though mean  
Drawn to his part. But other Powers as great  
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within  
Or from without to all temptations armed.  
Hadst thou the same free will and power to  
stand?  
Thou hadst. Whom hast thou then or what to  
accuse,  
But Heaven's free love dealt equally to all?  
Be then his love accursed, since, love or hate,  
To me alike it deals eternal woe.

70

Nay, cursed be thou; since against his thy will

Chose freely what it now so justly rues.—  
Me miserable! which way shall I fly  
Infinite wrath and infinite despair?  
Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell;  
And, in the lowest deep, a lower deep  
Still threatening to devour me opens wide,  
To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heaven.  
Oh, then, at last relent! Is there no place  
Left for repentance, none for pardon left?—  
None left but by submission; and that word  
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame  
Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduced  
With other promises and other vaunts  
Than to submit, boasting I could subdue  
The Omnipotent. Ay me! they little know  
How dearly I abide that boast so vain,  
Under what torments inwardly I groan.  
While they adore me on the throne of Hell,  
With diadem and sceptre high advanced,  
The lower still I fall, only supreme  
In misery; such joy ambition finds.—  
But say I could repent, and could obtain  
By act of grace my former state—how soon  
Would highth recall high thoughts! how soon  
    unsay  
What feigned submission swore! Ease would  
    recant  
Vows made in pain, as violent and void—

For never can true reconciliation grow  
Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so  
deep—

Which would but lead me to a worse relapse 100  
And heavier fall; so should I purchase dear,  
Short intermission bought with double smart.

This knows my Punisher; therefore as far  
From granting he, as I from begging, peace.

All hope excluded thus, behold, instead

Of us outcast, exiled, his new delight,

Mankind created, and for him this World!

So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear,

Farewell remorse! all good to me is lost.

Evil, be thou my good; by thee at least 110

Divided empire with Heaven's King I hold,

By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;

As Man ere long, and this new World shall  
know."

Thus while he spake each passion dimmed his  
face,

Thrice changed with pale, ire, envy, and despair,  
Which marred his borrowed visage, and betrayed  
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld;

For heavenly minds from such distempers foul

Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware

Each perturbation smoothed with outward  
calm, 120

Artificer of fraud; and was the first

That practised falsehood under saintly shew  
Deep malice to conceal, couched with revenge.  
Yet not enough had practised to deceive  
Uriel, once warned; whose eye pursued him  
down

The way he went, and on the Assyrian mount  
Saw him disfigured, more than could baffle  
Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce  
He marked and mad demeanor, then alone,  
As he supposed, all unobserved, unseen.      130

So on he fares, and to the border comes  
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,  
Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,  
As with a rural mound, the champain head  
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides  
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild  
Access denied; and overhead up-grew  
Insuperable hight of loftiest shade,  
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,  
A silvan scene; and, as the ranks ascend,      140  
Shade above shade, a woody theatre  
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops  
The verdurous wall of Paradise up-sprung,  
Which to our general sire gave prospect large  
Into his nether empire neighboring round.  
And higher than that wall a circling row  
Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,  
Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,

Appeared, with gay enamelled colors mixed;  
On which the sun more glad impressed his  
beams 150

Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,  
When God hath showered the earth: so lovely  
seemed

That landscape; and of pure now purer air  
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires  
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive  
All sadness but despair. Now gentle gales,  
Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense  
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole  
Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail  
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past 160  
Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow  
Sabean odors, from the spicy shore  
Of Araby the Blest; with such delay  
Well pleased they slack their course, and many  
a league

Cheered with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles:  
So entertained those odorous sweets the Fiend,  
Who came their bane, though with them better  
pleased

Than Asmodeus with the fishy fume  
That drove him, though enamoured, from the  
spouse  
Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent 170  
From Media post to Egypt, there fast-bound.

Now to the ascent of that steep savage hill  
Satan had journeyed on, pensive and slow;  
But further way found none, so thick entwined,  
As one continued brake, the undergrowth  
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplexed  
All path of man or beast that passed that way:  
One gate there only was, and that looked east  
On the other side. Which when the Arch-felon  
saw,

Due entrance he disdained, and, in contempt, 180  
At one slight bound high overleaped all bound  
Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within  
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,  
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,  
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve,  
In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,  
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold;  
Or as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash  
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,  
Cross-barred and bolted fast, fear no assault, 190  
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:  
So climb this first grand thief into God's fold;  
So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.  
Thence up he flew, and on the Tree of Life,  
The middle tree and highest there that grew,  
Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life  
Thereby regained, but sat devising death  
To them who lived; nor on the virtue thought

Of that life-giving plant, but only used  
For prospect, what well used had been the  
pledge 200

Of immortality. So little knows  
Any, but God alone, to value right  
The good before him, but perverts best things  
To worse abuse, or to their meanest use.

Beneath him with new wonder now he views,  
To all delight of human sense exposed,  
In narrow room Nature's whole wealth, yea, more,  
A Heaven on Earth; for blissful Paradise  
Of God the garden was, by him in the east  
Of Eden planted. Eden stretched her line 210  
From Auran eastward to the royal towers  
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,  
Or where the sons of Eden long before  
Dwelt in Telassar. In this pleasant soil  
His far more pleasant garden God ordained.  
Out of the fertile ground he caused to grow  
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;  
And all amid them stood the Tree of Life,  
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit  
Of vegetable gold; and, next to life 220  
Our death, the Tree of Knowledge, grew fast by,  
Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.  
Southward through Eden went a river large,  
Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill  
Passed, underneath ungulfed; For God had thrown

That mountain, as his garden-mould high raised,  
Upon the rapid current, which, through veins  
Of porous earth with kindly thirst up-drawn,  
Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill  
Watered the garden; thence united fell      230  
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,  
Which from his darksome passage now appears;  
And now, divided into four main streams,  
Runs diverse, wandering many a famous realm  
And country, whereof here needs no account;  
But rather to tell how, if Art could tell  
How, from that sapphire fount the crisped books,  
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,  
With mazy error under pendent shades,  
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed      240  
Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice Art  
In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon  
Poured forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,  
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote  
The open field, and where the unpierced shade  
Imbrowned the noon tide bowers. Thus was this  
place

A happy rural seat of various view;  
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and  
balm,  
Others whose fruit, burnished with golden rind,  
Hung amiable—Hesperian fables true,      250  
If true, here only—and of delicious taste.

Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks  
Grazing the tender herb, where interposed,  
Or palmy hillock, or the flowery lap  
Of some irriguous valley spread her store,  
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.  
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves  
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine  
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps  
Luxuriant. Meanwhile murmuring waters

fall

260

Down the slope hills dispersed, or in a lake,  
That to the fringed bank, with myrtle crowned,  
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.  
The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,  
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune  
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,  
Knit with the graces and the Hours in dance,  
Led on the eternal Spring. Not that fair field  
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,  
Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis

270

Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain  
To seek her through the world; nor that sweet  
grove

Of Daphne, by Orontes and the inspired  
Castalian spring, might with this Paradise  
Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian isle,  
Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,  
Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Libyan Jove,

Hid Amalthea and her florid son,  
Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye;  
Nor, where Abassin kings their issue guard, 28.  
Mount Amara, though this by some supposed  
True Paradise, under the Ethiop line  
By Nilus' head, enclosed with shining rock,  
A whole day's journey high, but wide remote  
From this Assyrian garden, where the Fiend  
Saw undelighted all delight, all kind  
Of living creatures, new to sight and strange.

Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,  
Godlike erect, with native honor clad,  
In naked majesty seemed lords of all, 29.  
And worthy seemed; for in their looks divine  
The image of their glorious Maker shone,  
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure  
—Severe, but in true filial freedom placed,—  
Whence true authority in men; though both  
Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed;  
For contemplation he and valor formed,  
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace;  
He for God only, she for God in him.  
His fair large front and eye sublime declared 300  
Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks  
Round from his parted forelock manly hung  
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad.  
She, as a veil down to the slender waist,  
Her unadorned golden tresses wore

Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved,  
As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied  
Subjection, but required with gentle sway,  
And by her yielded, by him best received,  
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride, 310  
And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay.

Nor those mysterious parts were then concealed;  
Then was not guilty shame. Dishonest shame  
Of Nature's works, honor dishonorable,  
Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind  
With shews instead, mere shews of seeming pure,  
And banished from Man's life his happiest life,  
Simplicity and spotless innocence!

So passed they naked on, nor shunned the sight  
Of God or Angel, for they thought no ill: 320  
So hand in hand they passed, the loveliest pair  
That ever since in love's embraces met;  
Adam the goodliest man of men since born  
His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.

Under a tuft of shade, that on a green  
Stood whispering soft, by a fresh fountain-side,  
They sat them down; and, after no more toil  
Of their sweet gardening labor than sufficed  
To recommend cool Zephyr, and made ease  
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite 330  
More grateful, to their supper fruits they fell,  
Nectarine fruits, which the compliant boughs  
Yielded them, sidelong as they sat recline

On the soft downy bank, damasked with flowers.  
The savory pulp they chew, and in the rind,  
Still as they thirsted, scoop the brimming  
stream;

Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles  
Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as beseems  
Fair couple, linked in happy nuptial league,  
Alone as they. About them frisking played 340  
All beasts of the earth, since wild, and of all  
chase

In wood or wilderness, forest or den.  
Sporting the lion ramped, and in his paw  
Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,  
Gambolled before them; the unwieldy elephant,  
To make them mirth, used all his might, and  
wreathed

His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly,  
Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine  
His braided train, and of his fatal guile  
Gave proof unheeded. Others on the grass 350  
Couched, and now filled with pasture gazing sat,  
Or bedward ruminating; for the sun,  
Declined, was hastening now with prone career  
To the Ocean isles, and in the ascending scale  
Of heaven the stars that usher evening rose:  
When Satan, still in gaze, as first he stood,  
Scarce thus at length failed speech recovered sad:  
“O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold?

Into our room of bliss thus high advanced  
Creatures of other mould, earth-born per-  
haps,

360

Not Spirits, yet to heavenly Spirits bright  
Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue  
With wonder, and could love, so lively shines  
In them divine resemblance, and such grace  
The hand that formed them on their shape hath  
. . . poured.

Ah, gentle pair! ye little think how nigh  
Your change approaches, when all these delights  
Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe,  
More woe, the more your taste is now of joy.  
Happy, but for so happy ill secured

370

Long to continue, and this high seat your  
Heaven

Ill fenced for Heaven to keep out such a foe  
As now is entered; yet no purposed foe  
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,  
Though I unpitied. League with you I seek,  
And mutual amity, so strait, so close,  
That I with you must dwell, or you with me  
Henceforth. My dwelling haply may not please,  
Like this fair Paradise, your sense, yet such  
Accept your Maker's work; he gave it me,

380

Which I as freely give. Hell shall unfold,  
To entertain you two, her widest gates,  
And send forth all her kings; there will be room,

Not like these narrow limits, to receive  
Your numerous offspring; if no better place,  
Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge  
On you who wrong me not, for him who  
wronged.

And should I at your harmless innocence  
Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,  
Honor and empire, with revenge enlarged      390  
By conquering this new World, compels me now  
To do what else, though damned, I should abhor."

So spake the Fiend, and with necessity,  
The tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds.  
Then, from his lofty stand on that high tree,  
Down he alights among the sportful herd  
Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,  
Now other, as their shape served best his end  
Nearer to view his prey, and, unespied,  
To mark what of their state he more might  
learn    400

By word or action marked. About them round  
A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;  
Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spied  
In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,  
Straight couches close, then rising changes oft  
His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,  
Whence rushing he might surest seize them both,  
Griped in each paw: when Adam first of men  
To first of woman Eve thus moving speech

Turned him, all ear to hear new utterance  
flow : 410

"Sole partner and sole part of all these joys,  
Dearer thyself than all, needs must the power  
That made us, and for us this ample World,  
Be infinitely good, and of his good  
As liberal and free as infinite;  
That raised us from the dust, and placed us here  
In all this happiness, who at his hand  
Have nothing merited, nor can perform  
Aught whereof he hath need; he who requires  
From us no other service than to keep 420  
This one, this easy charge, of all the trees  
In Paradise that bear delicious fruit,  
So various, not to taste that only Tree  
Of Knowledge, planted by the Tree of Life;  
So near grows death to life, whate'er death is,  
Some dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou  
knowest

God hath pronounced it death to taste that tree,  
The only sign of our obedience left,  
Among so many signs of power and rule  
Conferred upon us, and dominion given 430  
Over all other creatures that possess  
Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard  
One easy prohibition, who enjoy  
Free leave so large to all things else, and choice  
Unlimited of manifold delights;

But let us ever praise him, and extol  
His bounty, following our delightful task,  
To prune these growing plants, and tend these  
flowers,

Which were it toilsome yet with thee were  
sweet."

To whom thus Eve replied;—“O thou for whom  
And from whom I was formed, flesh of thy  
flesh,

441

And without whom am to no end, my guide  
And head, what thou hast said is just and right.  
For we to him indeed all praises owe,  
And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy  
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee  
Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou  
Like consort to thyself canst nowhere find.  
That day I oft remember, when from sleep  
I first awaked, and found myself reposed

45c

Under a shade on flowers, much wondering  
where

And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.  
Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound  
Of waters issued from a cave, and spread  
Into a liquid plain, then stood unmoved  
Pure as the expanse of heaven. I thither went,  
With unexperienced thought, and laid me down  
On the green bank, to look into the clear  
Smooth lake, that to me seemed another sky.

As I bent down to look, just opposite 460  
A shape within the watery gleam appeared,  
Bending to look on me: I started back,  
It started back; but pleased I soon returned,  
Pleased it returned as soon with answering looks  
Of sympathy and love. There I had fixed  
Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain desire,  
Had not a voice thus warned me: 'What thou  
seest,

What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;  
With thee it came and goes. But follow me,  
And I will bring thee where no shadow stays 470

Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he  
Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy  
Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear

Multitudes like thyself, and thence be called  
Mother of human race.' What could I do,  
But follow straight, invisibly thus led?  
Till I espied thee, fair indeed and tall,  
Under a platan; yet methought less fair,  
Less winning soft, less amiably mild,

Than that smooth watery image. Back I  
turned; 480

Thou following criedst aloud, 'Return, fair Eve;  
Whom fiest thou? whom thou fiest, of him  
thou art,

His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent  
Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,

Substantial life, to have thee by my side  
Henceforth an individual solace dear;  
Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim  
My other half.' With that thy gentle hand  
Seized mine; I yielded, and from that time see  
How beauty is excelled by manly grace      490  
And wisdom, which alone is truly fair."

So spake our general mother, and with eyes  
Of conjugal attraction unreproved,  
And meek surrender, half-embracing leaned  
On our first father; half her swelling breast  
Naked met his, under the flowing gold  
Of her loose tresses hid. He in delight,  
Both of her beauty and submissive charms,  
Smiled with superior love, as Jupiter  
On Juno smiles, when he impregnates the clouds 500  
That shed May flowers, and pressed her matron lip  
With kisses pure. Aside the Devil turned  
For envy, yet with jealous leer malign.  
Eyed them askance, and to himself thus plain'd:  
"Sight hateful! sight tormenting! thus these two  
Imparadised in one another's arms,  
The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill  
Of bliss on bliss; while I to Hell am thrust,  
Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,  
Among our other torments not the least,      510  
Still unfulfilled, with pain of longing pines.  
Yet let me not forget what I have gained

From their own mouths. All is not theirs it seems;

One fatal tree there stands, of Knowledge called,  
Forbidden them to taste. Knowledge forbidden!  
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord  
Envy them that? can it be sin to know?

Can it be death? and do they only stand  
By ignorance? is that their happy state,  
The proof of their obedience and their faith? 520

Oh, fair foundation laid whereon to build  
Their ruin! Hence I will excite their minds  
With more desire to know, and to reject  
Envious commands, invented with design  
To keep them low, whom knowledge might exalt  
Equal with Gods. Aspiring to be such,  
They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?—  
But first with narrow search I must walk round  
This garden, and no corner leave unspied.

A chance but chance may lead where I may  
meet 530

Some wandering Spirit of Heaven by fountain-side,  
Or in thick shade retired, from him to draw  
What further would be learned. Live while ye may  
Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,  
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed."

So saying, his proud step he scornful turned,  
But with sly circumspection, and began

Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale  
his roam.

Meanwhile in utmost longitude, where heaven  
With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun 540

Slowly descended, and with right aspect

Against the eastern gate of Paradise

Levelled his evening rays. It was a rock  
Of alabaster, piled up to the clouds,

Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent

Accessible from earth, one entrance high;

The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung

Still as it rose, impossible to climb.

Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,

Chief of the angelic guards, awaiting night. 550

About him exercised heroic games

The unarmed youth of Heaven, but nigh at hand  
Celestial armory, shields, helms, and spears,

Hung high, with diamond flaming and with gold.

Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even

On a sunbeam, swift as a shooting star

In autumn thwarts the night, when vapors fired

Impress the air, and shews the mariner

From what point of his compass to beware

Impetuosity winds. He thus began in haste: 560

"Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given  
Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place  
No evil thing approach or enter in..."

This day at highth of noon came to my sphere

A Spirit, zealous, as he seemed, to know  
More of the Almighty's works, and chiefly Man,  
God's latest image. I described his way  
Bent on all speed, and marked his airy gait;  
But in the mount that lies from Eden north,  
Where he first lighted, soon discerned his  
looks

570

Alien from Heaven, with passions foul obscured.  
Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade  
Lost sight of him. One of the banished crew,  
I fear, hath ventured from the Deep, to raise  
New troubles; him thy care must be to find."

To whom the winged warrior thus returned:  
"Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,  
Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sittest,  
See far and wide. In at this gate none pass  
The vigilance here placed, but such as come

580

Well known from Heaven; and since meridian  
hour

No creature thence. If Spirit of other sort,  
So minded, have o'erleaped these earthly bounds  
On purpose, hard thou knowest it to exclude  
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar.  
But if within the circuit of these walks,  
In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom  
Thou tellest, by morrow dawning I shall know."

So promised he ; and Uriel to his charge

Returned on that bright beam, whose point now  
raised

Bore him slope downward to the sun now  
fallen

591

Beneath the Azorès ; whether the prime orb,  
Incredible how swift, had hither rolled  
Diurnal, or this less volubil earth,  
By shorter flight to the east, had left him there,  
Arraying with reflected purple and gold  
The clouds that on his western throne attend.

Now came still Evening on, and Twilight grey  
Had in her sober livery all things clad;

Silence accompanied ; for beast and bird, 600  
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests  
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale;  
She all night long her amorous descant sung.

Silence was placed ; now glowed the firmament  
With living sapphire; Hesperus, that led  
The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,  
Rising in clouded majesty, at length  
Apparent queen unveiled her peerless light,  
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw;  
When Adam thus to Eve:—“Fair Consort, the  
hour

Of night and all things now retired to rest 611

Mind us of like repose, since God hath set  
Labor and rest, as day and night, to men  
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep,

Now falling with soft slumberous weight, inclines  
Our eyelids. Other creatures all day long  
Rove idle, unemployed, and less need rest;  
Man hath his daily work of body or mind  
Appointed, which declares his dignity,  
And the regard of Heaven on all his ways; 620  
While other animals unactive range,  
And of their doings God takes no account.—  
Tomorrow, ere fresh morning streak the east  
With first approach of light, we must be risen,  
And at our pleasant labor to reform,  
Yon flowery arbors, yonder alleys green,  
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown.  
That mock our scant manuring, and require  
More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth.  
Those blossoms also, and those dropping  
        guns, 630  
That lie bestrown, unsightly and unsmooth,  
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease;  
Meanwhile as Nature wills, night bids us rest.”  
To whom thus Eve with perfect beauty adorned:  
“My author and disposer, what thou biddest  
Unargued I obey; so God ordains:  
God is thy law, thou mine; to know no more  
Is woman’s happiest knowledge, and her praise.  
With thee conversing I forget all time;  
All seasons and their change, all please alike. 640  
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,

With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,  
When first on this delightful land he spreads  
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,  
Glistering with dew; fragrant the fertile earth  
After soft showers; and sweet the coming-on  
Of grateful evening mild; then silent night  
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,  
And these the gems of heaven, her starry train:  
But neither breath of morn, when she ascends

650

With charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun  
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,  
Glistering with dew; nor fragrance after showers;  
Nor grateful evening mild; nor silent night,  
With this her solemn bird; nor walk by moon,  
Or glittering starlight, without thee is sweet.  
But wherefore all night long shine these? for whom  
This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all  
eyes?"

To whom our general ancestor replied:  
"Daughter of God and Man, accomplished  
Eve,

660

These have their course to finish round the earth,  
By morrow-evening, and from land to land  
In order, though to nations yet unborn,  
Ministering light prepared, they set and rise;  
Lest total Darkness should by night regain  
Her old possession, and extinguish life

In Nature and all things; which these soft fires  
Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat  
Of various influence foment and warm,  
Temper or nourish, or in part shed down      670  
Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow  
On earth, made hereby apter to receive  
Perfection from the sun's more potent ray;  
These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,  
Shine not in vain. Nor think, though men were  
none,  
That heaven would want spectators, God want  
praise.

Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth;  
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:  
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold,  
Both day and night. How often, from the  
steep      680

Of echoing hill or thicket, have we heard  
Celestial voices to the midnight air,  
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,  
Singing their great Creator! Oft in bands  
While they keepwatch, or nightly rounding walk,  
With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds.  
In full harmonic number, joined, their songs  
Divide 'the night, and lift our thoughts to  
Heaven.'"

Thus talking, hand in hand alone they passed  
On to their blissful bower. It was a place      690

Chosen by the sovran Planter, when he framed  
All things to Man's delightful use. The roof  
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade,  
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew  
Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side  
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,  
Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous  
flower,

Iris all hues, roses and jessamine  
Reared high their flourished heads between, and  
wrought

Mosaic; underfoot the violet, 700  
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay  
Broidered the ground, more colored than with  
stone

Of costliest emblem : other creature here,  
Beast, bird, insect, or worm, durst enter none,  
Such was their awe of Man. In shadier bower  
More sacred and sequestered, though but feigned,  
Pan or Silvanus never slept, nor Nymph,  
Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,  
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs  
Espoused Eve decked first her nuptial bed, 710  
And heavenly quires the hymenæan sung,  
What day the genial Angel to our sire  
Brought her, in naked beauty more adorned,  
More lovely, than Pandora, whom the Gods  
Endowed with all their gifts, and, oh ! too like

In sad event, when, to the unwise son  
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnared  
Mankind with her fair looks, to be avenged  
On him who had stolen Jove's authentic fire.

Thus, at their shady lodge arrived, both  
stood, 720  
Both turned, and under open sky adored  
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and  
heaven.

Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,  
And starry pole: "Thou also madest the night,  
Maker omnipotent! and thou the day,  
Which we, in our appointed work employed,  
Have finished, happy in our mutual help  
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss.  
Ordained by the; and this delicious place  
For us too large, where thy abundance wants 73C  
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.  
But thou hast promised from us two a race  
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol  
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,  
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep,"

This said unanimous, and other rites  
Observing none, but adoration pure,  
Which God likes best, into their inmost bower  
Handed they went; and, eased the putting-off  
These troublesome disguises which we wear, 740  
Straight side by side were laid; not turned, I ween,

Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites  
Mysterious of coniugal love refused;  
Whatever hypocrites austere talk  
Of purity and place and innocence,  
Defaming as impure what God declares  
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.  
Our Maker bids increase; who bids abstain  
But our destroyer, foe to God and Man?  
Hail, wedded Love! mysterious law true source 750  
Of human offspring, sole propriety  
In Paradise of all things common else.  
By thee adulterous lust was driven from men  
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee,  
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,  
Relations dear, and all the charities  
Of father, son, and brother first were known.  
Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,  
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,  
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets! 760  
Whose bed is undefiled and chaste pronounced,  
Present or past, as saints and patriarchs used.  
Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights  
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,  
Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile  
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendeared,  
Casual fruition; nor in court amours,  
Mixed dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,  
Or serenate, which the starved lover sings

To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain. 770  
These lulled by nightingales, embracing, slept,  
And on their naked limbs the flowery roof,  
Showered roses, which the morn repaired. Sleep on  
Blest pair ! and oh, yet happiest ! if ye seek  
No happier state, and know to know no more.

Now had night measured with her shadowy cone  
Half-way up-hill this vast sublunar vault  
And from their ivory port the Cherubim  
Forth issuing, at the accustomed hour, stood armed  
To their night-watches in warlike parade; 780  
When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake

"Uzziel, have these draw off, and coast the south  
With strictest watch; these other wheel the north;  
Our circuit meets full west."—As flame they part,  
Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear.  
From these, two strong and subtle Spirits he called  
That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge:

"Ithuriël and Zephon, with winged speed  
Search through this garden, leave unsearched no  
nook:  
But chiefly whére those two fair creatures  
lodge," 790

Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.  
This evening from the sun's decline arrived  
Who tells of some infernal Spirit seen  
Hitherward bent—who could have thought?—  
escaped

The bars of Hell, on errand bad, no doubt:  
Such, where ye find, seize fast and hither bring."

So saying, on he led his radiant files,  
Dazzling the moon; these to the bower direct  
In search of whom they sought. Him there they  
found,

Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve 800  
Assaying by his devilish art to reach  
The organs of her fancy, and with them forge  
Illusions, as he list, phantasms and dreams;  
Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint  
The animal spirits, that from pure blood arise,  
Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise  
At least distempered, discontented thoughts,  
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,  
Blown up with high conceits, engendering pride.  
Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear 810  
Touched lightly; for no falsehood can endure  
Touch of celestial temper, but returns  
Of force to its own likeness. Up he starts  
Discovered and surprised. As when a spark  
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid  
Fit for the tun some magazine to store  
Against a rumored war, the smutty grain  
With sudden blaze diffused inflames the air:  
So started up in his own shape the Fiend.  
Back stepped those two fair Angels, half-  
amazed 820

So sudden to behold the grisly king;  
Yet thus, unmoved with fear, accost him soon:

"Which of those rebel Spirits adjudged to Hell  
Comest thou, escaped thy prison? and trans-  
formed,

Why satest thou like an enemy in wait,  
Here watching at the head of these that sleep?"

"Know ye not then?" said Satan, filled with scorn,  
"Know ye not me? ye knew me once no mate  
For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar.  
Not to know me argues yourselves unknown 830  
The lowest of your throng; or if ye know,  
Why ask ye, and superfluous begin  
Your message, like to end as much in vain?"

To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with  
scorn:  
"Think not, revolted Spirit, thy shape the same,  
Or undiminished brightness to be known,  
As when thou stoodest in Heaven upright and  
pure.

That glory then, when thou no more wast good,  
Departed from thee, and thou resemblest now  
Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul. 840  
But come; for thou, be sure, shalt give account  
To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep  
This place inviolable, and these from harm."

So spake the Cherub; and his grave rebuke,  
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace

Invincible. Abashed the Devil stood,  
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw  
Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw, and pined  
His loss; but chiefly to find here observed  
His lustre visibly impaired; yet seemed      850  
Undaunted:—"If I must contend," said he,  
"Best with the best, the sender, not the sent.  
Or all at once; more glory will be won,  
Or less be lost."—"Thy fear," said Zephon bold,  
"Will save us trial what the least can do  
Single against thee wicked, and thence weak."

The Fiend replied not, overcome with rage;  
But, like a proud steed reined went haughty on,  
Champing his iron curb: to strive or fly  
He held it vain; awe from above had quelled    860  
His heart, not else dismayed. Now drew they nigh  
The western point, where those half-rounding  
guards

Just met, and closing stood in squadron joined,  
Awaiting next command. To whom their chief,  
Gabriël, from the front thus called aloud:

"O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet  
Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern  
Ithuriël and Zephon though the shade;  
And with them comes a third of regal port,  
But faded splendor wan, who by his gait      870  
And fierce demeanour seems the Prince of Hell,  
Not likely to part hence without contest.

Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours."

He scarce had ended, when those two approached,  
And brief related whom they brought, where found,

How busied, in what form and posture couched.  
To whom with stern regard thus Grabriel spake:  
"Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds pre-scribed

To thy transgressions, and disturbed the charge  
Of others? who approve not to transgress 880  
By thy example, but have power and right  
To question thy bold entrance on this place;  
Employed, it seems, to violate sleep, and those  
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss."

To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow:  
"Gabriel, thou hadst in Heaven the esteem of wise,

And such I held thee; but this question asked  
Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?

Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,

Though thither doomed? Thou wouldest thyself, no doubt, 890

And boldly venture to whatever place.

Furthest from pain, where thou mightest hope to change

Torment with ease, and soonest recompense  
Dole with delight, which in this place I sought;  
To thee no reason, who knowest only good,  
But evil hast not tried; and wilt object  
His will who bound us. Let him surer bar  
His iron gates, if he intends our stay  
In that dark durance. Thus much what was  
asked:

The rest is true, they found me where they  
say: 900

But that implies not violence or harm."

Thus he in scorn. The warlike Angel moved,  
Disdainfully half-smiling, thus replied:  
"Oh, loss of one in Heaven to judge of wise,  
Since Satan fell! whom folly overthrew,  
And now returns him from his prison, scaped,  
Bravely in doubt whether to hold them wise  
Or not, who ask what boldness brought him  
hither,

Unlicensed from his bounds in Hell prescribed;  
So wise he judges it to fly from pain 910

However, and to scape his punishment!

So judge thou still, presumptuous! till the wrath,  
Which thou incurrest by flying, meet thy flight  
Sevenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,  
Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain  
Can equal anger infinite provoked.

But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee

Came not all Hell broke loose? is pain to them  
Less pain, less to be fled? or thou than they  
Less hardy to endure? Courageous chief! 920  
The first in flight from pain! hadst thou alleged  
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,  
Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive."

To which the Fiend thus answered, frowning stern:

"Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain,  
Insulting Angel! well thou knowest I stood  
Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid  
The blasting, vollied thunder made all speed,  
And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.  
But still thy words at random, as before, 930  
Argue thy inexperience what behoves,  
From hard assays and ill successes past,  
A faithful leader, not to hazard all  
Through ways of danger by himself untried.  
I therefore, I alone, first undertook  
To wing the desolate Abyss, and spy  
This new-created world, whereof in Hell  
Fame is not silent, here in hope to find  
Better abode, and my afflicted Powers  
To settle here on earth, or in mid air; 940  
Though for possession put to try once more  
What thou and thy gay legions dare against;  
Whose easier business were to serve their Lord  
High up in Heaven, with songs to hymn his throne,

And practised distances, to cringe, not fight."

To whom the warrior Angel soon replied:  
"To say and straight unsay, pretending first  
Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,  
Argues no leader but a liar traced,  
Satan! and couldst thou faithful add? O  
name,

950

O sacred name of faithfulness profaned!  
Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?—  
Army of fiends! fit body to fit head,  
Was this your discipline and faith engaged,  
Your military obedience, to dissolve  
Allegiance to the acknowledged Power supreme?  
And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldest seem  
Patron of liberty, who more than thou  
Once fawned, and cringed, and servilely adored  
Heaven's awful Monarch? wherefore but in  
hope

960

To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?  
But mark what I areed thee now: Avaunt!  
Fly thither whence thou fleddest! If, from this  
hour,

Within these hallowed limits thou appear,  
Back to the infernal pit I drag thee chained,  
And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn  
The facile gates of Hell, too slightly barred."

So threatened he; but Satan to no threats  
Gave heed, but waxing more in rage replied:

"Then when I am thy captive talk of  
chains,

970

Proud military Cherub! but ere then  
Far heavier load thyself expect to feel  
From my prevailing arm, though Heaven's King  
Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,  
Used to the yoke, drawest his triumphant wheels  
In progress through the road of Heaven star-  
paved."

While thus he spake, the angelic squadron bright  
Turn'd fiery red, sharpening in mooned horns  
Their phalanx, and began to hem him round  
With ported spears, as thick as when a field 980  
Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends  
Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind  
Sways them; the careful ploughman doubting  
stands,

Lest on the threshing-floor his hopeful sheaves  
Prove chaff. On the other side, Satan alarmed,  
Collecting all his might, dilated stood,  
Like Teneriffe or Atlas, unremoved.  
His stature reached the sky, and on his crest  
Sat Horror plumed; nor wanted in his grasp  
What seemed both spear and shield. Now dread-  
ful deeds

990

Might have ensued, nor only Paradise  
In this commotion, but the starry cope  
Of heaven perhaps, or all the elements

At least had gone to wrack, disturbed and torn  
With violence of this conflict, had not soon  
The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,  
Hung forth in heaven his golden scales, yet seen  
Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign,  
Wherein all things created first he weighed,  
The pendulous round earth with balanced air 1000  
In counterpoise, now ponders all events,  
Battles and realms. In these he put two weights  
The sequel each of parting and of fight:  
The latter quick up flew, and kicked the beam,  
Which Gabriel spying thus bespake the Fiend:

“Satan, I know thy strength, and thou knowest  
mine,

Neither our own, but given; what folly then  
To boast what arms can do! since thine no more  
Than Heaven permits, nor mine, though doubled  
now

To trample thee as mire. For proof look up, 1010  
And read thy lot in yon celestial sign,  
Where thou art weighed, and shown how light,  
how weak,  
If thou resist.” The Fiend looked up, and knew  
His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled  
Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night.

# PARADISE LOST.

## BOOK V.

### THE ARGUMENT.

MORNING approached, Eve relates to Adam her troublesome dream; he likes it not, yet comforts her: they come forth to their day-labors; their morning hymn at the door of their bower. God to render Man inexcusable sends Raphael to admonish him of his obedience, of his free estate, of his enemy near at hand, who he is, and why his enemy, and whatever else may avail Adam to know. Raphael comes down to Paradise, his appearance described, his coming discerned by Adam afar off, sitting at the door of his bower; he goes out to meet him, brings him to his lodge, entertains him with the choicest fruits of Paradise got together by Eve; their discourse at table: Raphael performs his message, minds Adam of his state and of his enemy; relates at Adam's request who that enemy is, and how he came to be so, beginning from his first revolt in Heaven, and the occasion thereof; how he drew his legions after him to the parts of the North, and there incited them to rebel with him, persuading all but only Abdiel a Seraph, who in argument dissuades and opposes him, then forsakes him.

Now Morn, her rosy steps in the eastern clime  
Advancing, sowed the earth with orient pearl,  
When Adam waked, so customed, for his sleep  
Was aery light, from pure digestion bred

And temperate vapors bland, which the only sound

Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,  
Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song  
Of birds on every bough; so much the more  
His wonder was to find unwakened Eve,  
With tresses discomposed and glowing cheek, 10  
As though unquiet rest. He, on his side  
Leaning half-raised, with looks of cordial love,  
Hung over her enamored, and beheld  
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,  
Shot forth peculiar graces; then, with voice  
Mild as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,  
Her hand soft touching, whispered thus:—

“Awake,

My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,  
Heaven's last best gift, my ever-new delight,  
Awake! the morning shines, and the fresh field

20

Calls us; we lose the prime, to mark how spring  
Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,  
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,

How Nature paints her colors, how the bee  
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet.”

Such whispering waked her, but with startled eye  
On Adam, whom embracing thus she spake:

“O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,

My glory, my perfection, glad I see  
Thy face, and morn returned; for I this night— 30  
Such night till this I never passed—have  
dreamed,

If dreamed, not, as I oft am wont, of thee,  
Works of day past, or morrow's next design,  
But of offence and trouble, which my mind  
Knew never till this irksome night. Methought,  
Close at mine ear, one called me forth to walk  
With gentle voice—I thought it thine. It said,  
Why sleepest thou, Eve? now is the pleasant time,  
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields  
To the night-warbling bird, that now awake 40  
Tunes sweetest his love-labored song; now reigns  
Full-orbed the moon, and, with more pleasing  
light,

Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,  
If none regard. Heaven wakes with all his eyes,  
Whom to behold but thee, Nature's desire?  
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment  
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.  
I rose as at thy call, but found thee not;  
To find thee I directed then my walk;  
And on, methought, alone I passed through  
ways

50

That brought me on a sudden to the tree  
Of interdicted knowledge. Fair it seemed,  
Much fairer to my fancy than by day;

And, as I wondering looked, beside it stood  
One shaped and winged like one of those from  
Heaven,  
By us oft seen: his dewy locks distilled  
Ambrosia. On that tree he also gazed;  
And, 'O fair plant,' said he, 'with fruit sur-  
charged,  
Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,  
Nor God, nor Man? is knowledge so despised? 60  
Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?  
Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold  
Longer thy offered good; why else set here?  
This said, he paused not, but with venturous arm  
He plucked, he tasted. Me damp horror chilled  
At such bold words, vouch'd with a deed so bold;  
But he thus, overjoyed: 'O fruit divine,  
Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt,  
Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit  
For Gods, yet able to make Gods of men. 70  
And why not Gods of men, since good, the more  
Communicated, more abundant grows,  
The author not impaired, but honored more?  
Here, happy creature, fair angelic Eve!  
Partake thou also; happy though thou art,  
Happier thou mayest be, worthier canst not be.  
Taste this, and be henceforth among the Gods,  
Thyself a Goddess, not to earth confined,  
But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes

Ascend to Heaven, by merit thine, and see 80  
What life the Gods live there, and such live thou.'  
So saying he drew nigh, and to me held,  
Even to my mouth of that same fruit held part  
Which he had plucked; the pleasant savoury smell  
So quickened appetite, that I, methought,  
Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds  
With him I flew, and underneath beheld  
The earth outstretched immense, a prospect wide  
And various. Wondering at my flight and change  
To this high exaltation, suddenly 90  
My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk  
down,  
And fell asleep; but oh, how glad I waked  
To find this but a dream!" Thus Eve her night  
Related, and thus Adam answered sad:  
"Best image of myself, and dearer half,  
The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep  
Affects me equally; nor can I like  
This uncouth dream, of evil sprung, I fear;  
Yet evil whence? in thee can harbor none,  
Created pure. But know that in the soul 100  
Are many lesser faculties, that serve  
Reason as chief; among these Fancy next  
Her office holds; of all external things,  
Which the five watchful senses represent,  
She forms imaginations, airy shapes,  
Which Reason joining or disjoining frames

All what we affirm or what deny, and call  
Our knowledge or opinion; then retires  
Into her private cell, when Nature rests.  
Oft in her absence mimic Fancy wakes      110  
To imitate her; but, misjoining shapes,  
Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams,  
Ill-matching words and deeds long past or late.  
Some such resemblances, methinks, I find  
Of our last evening's talk, in this thy dream,  
But with addition strange; yet be not sad.  
Evil into the mind of God or Man  
May come and go, so unapproved, and leave  
No spot or blame behind; which gives me hope  
That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream    120  
Waking thou never wilt consent to do.  
Be not disheartened then, nor cloud those looks,  
That wont be more cheerful and serene,  
Than when fair Morning first smiles on the  
world;  
And let us to our fresh employments rise,  
Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers  
That open now their choicest bosomed smells,  
Reserved from night, and kept for thee in store."

So cheered he his fair spouse, and she was  
cheered,  
But silently a gentle tear let fall      130  
From either eye, and wiped them with her hair.  
Two other precious drops that ready stood,

Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell  
Kissed, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse  
And pious awe, that feared to have offended.

So all was cleared, and to the field they haste.  
But first, from under shady arborous roof  
Soon as they forth were come to open sight  
Of dayspring, and the sun—who scarce uprisen,  
With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean brim, 140  
Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,  
Discovering in wide landscape all the east  
Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains—  
Lowly they bowed, adoring, and began  
Their orisons, each morning duly paid  
In various style; for neither various style  
Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise  
Their Maker in fit strains, pronounced or sung  
Unmeditated; such prompt eloquence  
Flowed from their lips, in prose or numerous  
verse,

More tuneable than needed lute or harp 151  
To add more sweetness; and they thus began:

“These are thy glorious works, Parent of  
good,  
Almighty! thine this universal frame,  
Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous then!  
Unspeakable, who sittest above these heavens,  
To us invisible, or dimly seen  
In these thy lowest works; yet these declare

Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.--

Speak, ye who best can tell, ye sons of light, 160  
Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs  
And choral symphonies, day without night,  
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in Heaven,  
On Earth join, all ye creatures, to extol  
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.  
Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,  
If better thou belong not to the dawn,  
Sure pledge of day, that crownest the smiling  
Morn

With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere,  
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime. 170  
Thou Sun, of this great World both eye and soul,  
Acknowledge him thy greater; sound his praise  
In thy eternal course, both when thou climbest,  
And when high noon hast gained, and when thou  
falllest.

Moon, that now meetest the orient Sun, now fiest,  
With the fixed Stars, fixed in their orb that flies;  
And ye, five other wandering Fires, that move  
In mystic dance not without song, resound  
His praise, who out of darkness called up light.  
Air, and ye Elements, the eldest birth 180  
Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run  
Perpetual circle, multiform, and mix  
And nourish all things, let your ceaseless change

Vary to our great Maker still new praise.  
Ye Mists and Exhalations, that now rise  
From hill or steaming lake, dusky or grey,  
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,  
In honor to the World's great Author rise;  
Whether to deck with clouds the uncolored sky,  
Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers, 190  
Rising or falling still advance his praise.  
His praise, ye Winds, that from four quarters blow,  
Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye  
Pines,

With every plant, in sign of worship wave.  
Fountains, and ye that warble, as ye flow,  
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.  
Join voices, all ye living Souls; ye Birds,  
That singing up to Heaven-gate ascend,  
Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.  
Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk 200  
The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep,  
Witness if I be silent, morn or even,  
To hill or valley, fountain, or fresh shade,  
Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.  
Hail, universal Lord, be bounteous still  
To give us only good; and if the night  
Have gathered aught of evil, or concealed,  
Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark !”  
So prayed they innocent, and to their thoughts  
Firm peace recovered soon, and wonted calm. 210

On to their morning's rural work they haste,  
Among sweet dews and flowers; where any row  
Of fruit-trees over-woody reached too far  
Their pampered boughs, and needed hands to  
check

Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine  
To wed her elm; she spoused about him twines  
Her marriageable arms, and with her brings  
Her dower, the adopted clusters, to adorn  
His barren leaves. Them thus employed beheld  
With pity Heaven's high King, and to him called  
Raphael, the sociable Spirit, that deigned 221  
To travel with Tobias, and secured  
His marriage with the seven-times wedded maid.

"Raphael," said he, "thou hearest what stir  
on Earth  
Satan, from Hell scaped through the darksome  
gulf,

Hath raised in Paradise, and how disturbed  
This night the human pair, how he designs  
In them at once to ruin all mankind.

Go therefore, half this day, as friend with friend,  
Converse with Adam, in what bower or shade 234  
Thou findest him from the heat of noon retired,  
To respite his day-labor with repast,  
Or with repose; and such discourse bring-on,  
As may advise him of his happy state,  
Happiness in his power left free to will,

Left to his own free-will, his will though free  
Yet mutable; whence warn him to beware  
He swerve not, too secure. Tell him withal  
His danger, and from whom; what enemy,  
Late fallen himself from Heaven, is plotting  
now

240

The fall of others from like state of bliss;  
By violence? no, for that shall be withstood;  
But by deceit and lies. This let him know,  
Lest wilfully transgressing he pretend  
Surprisal, unadmonished, unforewarned."

So spake the eternal Father, and fulfilled  
All justice. Nor delayed the winged Saint  
After his charge received; but, from among  
Thousand celestial Ardours, where he stood,  
Veiled with his gorgeous wings, up-springing  
light

Flew through the midst of Heaven—the angelic  
quires,

251

On each hand parting, to his speed gave way  
Through all the empyreal road—till, at the gate  
Of Heaven arrived, the gate self-opened wide,  
On golden hinges turning, as by work  
Divine the sovran Architect had framed.  
From hence—no cloud or, to obstruct his sight,  
Star interposed however small—he sees,  
Not unconform to other shining globes,

Earth, and the garden of God, with cedars crowded

Above all hills. As when by night the glass 261  
Of Galileo, less assured, observes  
Imagined lands and regions in the moon;  
Or pilot from amidst the Cyclades  
Delos or Samos first appearing kens,  
A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight  
He speeds, and, through the vast ethereal sky,  
Sails between worlds and worlds with steady  
wing,

Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan  
Winnows the buxom air; till, within soar 270  
Of towering eagles, to all the fowls he seems  
A phoenix, gazed by all, as that sole bird,  
When, to enshrine his reliques in the Sun's  
Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.

At once on the eastern cliff of Paradise  
He lights, and to his proper shape returns,  
A Seraph winged. Six wings he wore, to shade  
His lineaments divine; the pair that clad  
Each shoulder broad came mantling o'er his breast  
With regal ornament; the middle pair 280  
Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round  
Skirted his loins and thighs, with downy gold  
And colors dipped in heaven; the third his feet  
Shadowed from either heel, with feathered mail,  
Sky-tinctured grain. Like Maia's son he stood,

And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance  
filled

The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands  
Of Angels under watch, and to his state  
And to his message high in honor rise;  
For on some message high they guessed him  
bound.

Their glittering tents he passed, and now is come  
Into the blissful field, through groves of  
myrrh,

292

And flowering odors, cassia, nard, and balm,  
A wilderness of sweets; For Nature here  
Wantoned as in her prime, and played at will  
Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,  
Wild above rule or art, enormous bliss.

Him, through the spicy forest onward come,  
Adam discerned, as in the door he sat  
Of his cool bower, while now the mounted

sun

300

Shot down direct his fervid rays, to warm  
Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam  
needs;

And Eve within, due at her hour, prepared  
For dinner savory fruits, of taste to please  
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst  
Of nectarous draughts between, from milky  
stream,  
Berry or grape: to whom thus Adam called:

"Haste hither, Eve, and, worth thy sight, be  
hold

Eastward among those trees what glorious shape  
Comes this way moving; seems another morn 310  
Risen on mid-noon. Some great behest from  
Heaven

To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe  
This day to be our guest. But go with speed,  
And what thy stores contain bring forth, and pour  
Abundance, fit to honor and receive  
Our heavenly stranger. Well we may afford  
Our givers, their own gifts, and large bestow  
From large bestowed, where Nature multiplies  
Her fertile growth, and by disburdening grows  
More fruitful, which instructs us not to  
spare."

320  
To whom thus Eve:—"Adam, earth's hallowed  
mould,

Of God inspired! small store will serve, where  
store,

All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;  
Save what by frugal storing firmness gains  
To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes.  
But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,  
Each plant and juiciest gourd, will pluck such  
choice

To entertain our Angel-guest, as he  
Beholding shall confess, that here on Earth

God hath dispensed bounties as in Heaven." 330

So saying, with despatchful looks in haste  
She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent,  
What choice to choose for delicacy best,  
What order, so contrived as not to mix  
Tastes, not well joined, inelegant, but bring  
Taste after taste upheld with kindliest change;  
Bestirs her then, and, from each tender stalk  
Whatever earth, all-bearing mother, yields,  
In India East or West, or middle shore  
In Pontus, or the Punic coast, or where 340  
Alcinoüs reigned, fruit of all kinds, in coat  
Rough or smooth-rined, or bearded husk, or shell,  
She gathers, tribute large, and on the board  
Heaps with unsparing hand. For drink the grape  
She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths  
From many a berry, and from sweet kernels  
pressed

She tempers dulcet creams; nor these to hold  
Wants her fit vessels pure; then strows the ground  
With rose and odors from the shrub unfumed.

Meanwhile our primitive great sire, to meet 350  
His godlike guest, walks forth, without more train  
Accompanied than with his own complete  
Perfections; in himself was all his state,  
More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits  
On princes, when their rich retinue long  
Of horses led, and grooms besmeared with gold,

Dazzies the crowd, and sets them all agape.  
Nearer his presence, Adam, though not awed,  
Yet with submiss approach and reverence meek,  
As to a superior nature, bowing low,        360  
Thus said:—"Native of Heaven—for other place  
None can than Heaven such glorious shape  
contain—

Since, by descending from the Thrones above,  
Those happy places thou hast deigned awhile  
To want, and honor these, vouchsafe with us,  
Two only, who yet by sovran gift possess  
This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower  
To rest, and what the garden choicest bears  
To sit and taste, till this meridian heat  
Be over, and the sun more cool decline."    370

Whom thus the angelic Virtue answered mild:  
"Adam, I therefore came; nor art thou such  
Created, or such place hast here to dwell,  
As may not oft invite, though Spirits of Heaven  
To visit thee. Lead on then where thy bower  
O'ershades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,  
I have at will."—So to the silvan lodge  
They came, that like Pomona's arbor smiled,  
With flowerets decked, and fragrant smells; but  
Eve,

Undecked save with herself, more lovely fair    380  
Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feigned  
Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,

Stood to entertain her guest from Heaven; no veil  
She needed, virtue proof; no thought infirm  
Altered her cheek. On whom the angel *Hail!*  
Bestowed, the holy salutation used  
Long after to blest Mary, second Eve :

"Hail, Mother of mankind, whose fruitful womb  
Shall find the world more numerous with thy sons,  
Than with these various fruits the trees of  
God

390

Have heaped this table!"—Raised of grassy turf  
Their table was, and mossy seats had round,  
And on her ample square from side to side  
All autumn piled, though spring and autumn here  
Danced hand in hand. Awhile discourse they  
hold—

No fear less dinner cool—when thus began  
Our author :—"Heavenly stranger, please to taste  
These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom  
All perfect good, unmeasured out, descends,  
To us for food and for delight hath caused

400

The earth to yield; unsavory food perhaps  
To spiritual natures; only this I know,  
That one celestial Father gives to all."

To whom the Angel :—"Therefore what he  
gives—

Whose praise be ever sung—to Man, in part  
Spiritual, may of purest Spirits be found  
No ingrateful food; and food alike those pure

Intelligential substances require,  
A's doth your rational; and both contain:  
Within them every lower faculty                  410  
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch,  
taste,  
Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,  
And corporeal to incorporeal turn.  
For know, whatever was created needs  
To be sustained and fed; of elements  
The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,  
Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires  
Ethereal, and as lowest first the moon;  
Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurged  
Vapors not yet into her substance turned.          420  
Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale  
From her moist continent to higher orbs.  
The sun, that light imparts to all, receives  
From all his alimental recompense  
In humid exhalations, and at even  
Sups with the Ocean. Though in Heaven the trees  
Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines  
Yield nectar; though from off the boughs each  
morn  
We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground  
Covered with pearly grain : yet God hath here 430  
Varied his bounty so with new delights,  
As may compare with Heaven; and to taste  
Think not I shall be nice." So down they sat,

And to their viands fell; nor seemingly  
The Angel, nor in mist, the common gloss  
Of theologians; but with keen despatch  
Of real hunger, the concoctive heat  
To transubstantiate; what redounds transpires  
Through Spirits with ease; nor wonder: if by fire  
Of sooty coal the empiric alchemist      440  
Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,  
Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold  
As from the mine. Meanwhile at table Eve  
Ministered naked, and their flowing cups  
With pleasant liquors crowned. O innocence  
Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,  
Then had the sons of God excuse to have been  
Enamored at that sight; but in those hearts  
Love unlibidinous reigned, nor jealousy  
Was understood, the injured lover's hell.      45C

Thus when with meats and drinks they had  
sufficed,  
Not burdened nature, sudden mind arose  
In Adam not to let the occasion pass,  
Given him by this great conference, to know  
Of things above his world, and of there being  
Who dwell in Heaven, whose excellence he saw  
Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms,  
Divine effulgence, whose high power so far  
Exceeded human, and his wary speech  
Thus to the empyreal minister he framed:      460

"Inhabitant with God, now know I well  
Thy favor, in this honor done to Man,  
Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsafed  
To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,  
Food not of Angels, yet accepted so, •  
As that more willingly thou couldst not seem  
At Heaven's high feasts to have fed; yet what  
compare!"

To whom the winged Hierarch replied:  
"O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom  
All things proceed, and up to him return, 470  
If not depraved from good, created all  
Such to perfection, one first matter all,  
Indued with various forms, various degrees  
Of substance, and, in things that live, of life;  
But more refined, more spirituous, and pure,  
As nearer to him placed or nearer tending,  
Each in their several active spheres assigned,  
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds  
Proportioned to each kind. So from the root  
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the  
leaves 480

More airy, last the bright consummate flower  
Spirits odorous breathes: flowers and their fruit,  
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed,  
To vital spirits aspire, to animal,  
To intellectual; give both life and sense,  
Fancy and understanding; whence the soul

Reason receives, and reason is her being,  
Discursive, or intuitive; discourse  
Is oftest yours, the latter most is ours,  
Differing but in degree, of kind the same.      490  
Wonder not then what God for you saw good  
If I refuse not, but convert, as you,  
To proper substance. Time may come when men  
With Angels may participate, and find  
No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare;  
And from these corporal nutriments perhaps  
Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,  
Improved by tract of time, and winged ascend  
Ethereäl, as we, or may at choice  
Here or in heavenly Páradise dwell;      500  
If ye be found obedient, and retain  
Unalterably firm his love entire,  
Whose progeny you are. Meanwhile enjoy  
Your fill what happiness this happy state  
Can comprehend, incapable of more."

To whom the patriarch of mankind replied:  
"O favorable Spirit, propitious guest,  
Well hast thou taught the way that might direct  
Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set  
From centre to circumference; whereon,      510  
In contemplation of created things,  
By steps we may ascend to God. But say,  
What meant that caution joined, *If ye be found*  
*Obedient?* can we want obedience then

To him, or possibly his love desert?  
Who formed us from the dust, and placed us  
here,  
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss  
Human desires can seek or apprehend."

To whom the Angel:—"Son of Heaven and  
Earth,

Attend! That thou art happy, owe to God: 520  
That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,  
That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.

This was that caution given thee; be advised.  
God may thee perfect, not immutable;  
And good he made thee, but to persevere  
He left it in thy power; ordained thy will  
By nature free, not overruled by fate  
Inextricable, or strict necessity.

Our voluntary service he requires,  
Not our necessitated; such with him 530

Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how  
Can hearts not free be tried, whether they serve  
Willing or no? who will but what they must  
By destiny, and can no other choose.

Myself and all the angelic host, that stand  
In sight of God enthroned, our happy state  
Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;  
On other surety none; freely we serve,  
Because we freely love, as in our will  
To love or not; in this we stand or fall. 540

And some are fallen, to disobedience fallen,  
And so from Heaven to deepest Hell. Oh, fall  
From what high state of bliss into what woe!"

To whom our great progenitor:—"Thy words  
Attentive, and with more delighted ear,  
Divine instructor, I have heard, than when  
Cherubic songs by night from neighboring hills  
Aerial music send; nor knew I not  
To be both will and deed created free.

Yet that we never shall forget to love        550  
Our Maker, and obey him whose command  
Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts  
Assured me, and still assure; though what thou  
tellest

Hath passed in Heaven, some doubt within me  
move,

But more desire to hear, if thou consent,  
The full relation, which must needs be strange,  
Worthy of sacred silence to be heard.  
And we have yet large day, for scarce the sun  
Hath finished half his journey, and scarce begins  
His other half in the great zone of heaven."    560

Thus Adam made request; and Raphaël,  
After short pause assenting, thus began:

"High matter thou enjoinest me, O prime of  
men,  
Sad task and hard; for how shall I relate  
To human sense the invisible exploits

Of warring Spirits? how, without remorse,  
The ruin of so many glorious once,  
And perfect while they stood? how last unfold  
The secrets of another world, perhaps  
Not lawful to reveal? Yet for thy good      570  
This is dispensed; and what surmounts the reach  
Of human sense I shall delineate so,  
By likening spiritual to corporal forms,  
As may express them best. Though what if  
Earth

Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein  
Each to other like, more than on Earth is  
thought!

"As yet this World was not, and Chaos wild  
Reigned where these heavens now roll, where  
earth now rests

Upon her centre poised; when on a day—  
For time, though in eternity, applied      580  
To motion, measures all things durable  
By present, past, and future—on such day  
As Heaven's great year brings forth, the emp'y-  
real host

Of Angels, by imperial summons called,  
Innumerable before the Almighty's throne  
Forthwith from all the ends of Heaven appeared,  
Under their hierarchs in orders bright.  
Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanced,  
Standards and gonfalons, 'twixt van and rear,

Stream in the air, and for distinction serve      590  
Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;  
Or in their glittering tissues bear emblazed  
Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love  
Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs  
Of circuit inexpressible they stood,  
Orb within orb, the Father infinite,  
By whom in bliss embosomed sat the Son,  
Amidst as from a flaming mount, whose top  
Brightness had made invisible, thus spake:

“ Hear, all ye Angels, progeny of light,      600  
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues,  
Powers,

Hear my decree, which unrevoked shall stand.  
This day I have begot whom I declare  
My only Son, and on this holy hill  
Him have anointed, whom ye now behold  
At my right-hand; your head I him appoint;  
And by myself have sworn, to him shall bow  
All knees in Heaven, and shall confess him Lord.  
Under his great vicegerent reign abide,

United as one individual soul,      610  
For ever happy. Him who disobeys  
Me disobeys, breaks union, and that day,  
Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls  
Into utter darkness, deep engulfed, his place  
Ordained without redemption, without end.”

“ So spake the Omnipotent, and with his words

All seemed well pleased; all seemed, but were  
not all.

That day, as other solemn days, they spent  
In song and dance about the sacred hill,  
Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere 620  
Of planets and of fixed in all her wheels  
Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,  
Eccentric, interwolved, yet regular  
Then most, when most irregular they seem;  
And in their motions harmony divine  
Smooths her charming tones, that God's own ear  
Listens delighted. Evening now approached—  
For we have also our evening and our morn,  
We ours for change delectable, not need—  
Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they  
turn 630

Desirous. All in circles as they stood,  
Tables are set, and on a sudden piled  
With Angels' food, and rubied nectar flows  
In pearl, in diamond and massy gold,  
Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heaven  
On flowers reposed, and with fresh flowerets  
crowned,  
They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet  
Quaff immortality and joy, secure  
Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds  
Excess, before the all-bounteous King, who  
showered

With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy. 641

"Now when ambrosial night, with clouds  
exhaled

From that high mount of God, whence light and  
shade

Spring both, the face of brightest Heaven had  
changed

To grateful twilight—for night comes not there  
In darker veil—and roseate dews disposed  
All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest;  
Wide over all the plain, and wider far

Than all this globous Earth in plain outspread—  
Such are the courts of God—the angelic throng, 650  
Dispersed in bands and files, their camp extend  
By living streams among the trees of life,  
Pavilions numberless, and sudden reared,  
Celestial tabernacles, where they slept  
Fanned with cool winds; save those who, in their  
course,

Melodious hymns about the sovran throne  
Alternate all night long. But not so waked  
Satan—so called him now, his former name  
Is heard no more in Heaven. He of the first,  
If not the first Archangel, great in power, 660  
In favor, and pre-eminence, yet fraught  
With envy against the Son of God, that day  
Honored by his great Father, and proclaimed  
Messiah, King anointed, could not bear

Through pride that sight, and thought himself impaired.

Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,  
Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour  
Fri'ldliest to sleep and silence, he resolved  
With all his legions to dislodge, and leave  
Unworshipped, unbeyed, the throne supreme, 670  
Contemptuous; and his next subordinate  
Awakening, thus to him in secret spake:

“ ‘Sleepest thou, companion dear? what sleep can close

Thy eyelids? and rememberest what decree,  
Of yesterday, so late hath passed the lips  
Of Heaven's Almighty. Thou to me thy thoughts  
Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart;  
Both waking we were one; how then can now  
Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest imposed;  
New laws from him who reigns new minds may raise,  
In us who serve, new counsels, to debate 681  
What doubtful may ensue.—More in this place  
To utter is not safe. Assemble thou  
Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;  
Tell them that by command, ere yet dim night  
Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste.  
And all who under me their banners wave,  
Homeward with flying march, where we possess  
The quarters of the North; there to prepare  
Fit entertainment to receive our King. 690

The great Messiah, and his new commands,  
Who speedily through all the hierarchies  
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.'

"So spake the false Archangel, and infused  
Bad influence into the unwary breast  
Of his associate. He together calls,  
Or several one by one, the regent Powers,  
Under him regent; tells, as he was taught,  
That, the Most High commanding, now ere night,  
Now ere dim night had disencumbered Heaven, 700  
The great hierachal standard was to move;  
Tells the suggested cause, and casts between  
Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound  
Or taint integrity. But all obeyed  
The wonted signal, and superior voice  
Of their great Potentate; for great indeed  
His name, and high was his degree in Heaven.  
His countenance, as the morning star that guides  
The starry flock, allured them, and with lies  
Drew after him the third part of Heaven'shost. 710  
"Meanwhile the eternal eye, whose sight discerns  
Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,  
And from within the golden lamps that burn  
Nightly before him, saw without their light  
Rebellion rising,—saw in whom, how spread  
Among the Sons of Morn, what multitudes  
Were banded to oppose his high decree:  
And smiling to his only Son thus said:

" 'Son, thou in whom my glory I behold.  
In full resplendence, Heir of all my might, 720  
Nearly it now concerns us to be sure  
Of our omnipotence, and with what arms  
We mean to hold what anciently we claim  
Of deity or empire: such a foe  
Is rising, who intends to erect his throne  
Equal to ours, throughout the spacious North;  
Nor so content, hath in his thought to try  
In battle what our power is, or our right.  
Let us advise, and to this hazard draw  
With speed what force is left, and all employ 730  
In our defence, lest unawares we lose  
This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.'

"To whom the Son, with calm aspect and clear,  
Lightning divine, ineffable, serene,  
Made answer:—'Mighty Father, thou thy foes  
Justly hast in derision, and secure  
Laughest at their vain designs and tumults vain,  
Matter to me of glory, whom their hate  
Illustrates, when they see all regal power  
Given me to quell their pride, and in event 740  
Know whether I be dextrous to subdue  
Thy rebels, or be found the worst in Heaven.'

"So spake the Son; but Satan with his powers  
Far was advanced on winged speed, a host  
Innumerable as the stars of night,  
Or stars of morning, dewdrops which the sun

Impearls on every leaf and every flower.  
Regions they passed, the mighty regencies  
Of Seraphim and Potentates and Thrones  
In their triple degrees; regions to which      750  
All thy dominion, Adam, is no more  
Than what this garden is to all the earth  
And all the sea, from one entire globose  
Stretched into longitude; which having passed  
At length into the limits of the North  
They came, and Satan to his royal seat  
High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount  
Raised on a mount, with pyramids and towers  
From diamond quarries hewn and rocks of gold,  
The palace of great Lucifer—so call      760  
That structure in the dialect of men  
Interpreted—which not long after he,  
Affecting all equality with God,  
In imitation of that mount whereon  
Messiah was declared in sight of Heaven,  
The Mountain of the Congregation called;  
For thither he assembled all his train,  
Pretending so commanded to consult  
About the great reception of their king  
Thither to come; and with calumnious art      770  
Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears:  
“ ‘Thrones, Dominations, Prinedoms, Virtues,  
Powers . . .  
If these magnific titles yet remain

Not merely titular, since by decree  
Another now hath to himself engrossed  
All power, and us eclipsed, under the name  
Of King, anointed; for whom all this haste  
Of midnight-march, and hurried meeting here,  
This only to consult how we may best,  
With what may be devised of honors new, 780  
Receive him, coming to receive from us  
Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,  
Too much to one, but double how endured  
To one and to his image now proclaimed?  
But what if better counsels might erect  
Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke!  
Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend  
The supple knee?—ye will not, if I trust  
To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves,  
Natives and sons of Heaven, possessed before 790  
By none; and if not equal all, yet free,  
Equally free; for orders and degrees  
Jar not with liberty, but well consist.  
Who can in reason then, or right, assume  
Monarchy over such as live by right  
His equals, if in power and splendor less,  
In freedom equal? or can introduce  
Law and edict on us, who without law  
Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,  
And look for adoration, to the abuse 800  
Of those imperial titles, which assert

Our being ordained to govern, not to serve.'

"Thus far his bold discourse without control  
Had audience, when among the Seraphim  
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal adored  
The Deity, and divine commands obeyed,  
Stood up, and, in a flame of zeal severe,  
The current of his fury thus opposed:

"O argument blasphemous, false, and proud!  
Words which no ear ever to hear in Heaven 810  
Expected! least of all from thee, ingrate,  
In place thyself so high above thy peers.  
Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn  
The just decree of God? pronounced and sworn,  
That to his only Son, by right indued  
With regal sceptre, every soul in Heaven  
Shall bend the knee, and in that honor due  
Confess him rightful King. Unjust, thou sayest,  
Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,  
And equal over equals to let reign, 820  
One over all with unsucceeded power.  
Shalt thou give law to God? shalt thou dispute  
With him the points of liberty? who made  
Thee what thou art, and formed the Powers of  
Heaven

Such as he pleased, and circumscribed their being.  
Yet, by experience taught, we know how good,  
And of our good and of our dignity  
How provident he is, how far from thought

To make us less, bent rather to exalt  
Our happy state, under one head more near 830  
United. But, to grant it thee unjust  
That equal over equals monarch reign—  
Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou  
count,

Or all angelic nature joined in one,  
Equal to him, begotten Son? by whom  
As by his Word the mighty Father made  
All things, even thee; and all the spirits of  
Heaven

By him created in their bright degrees,  
Crowned them with glory and to their glory  
named  
Thrones, Dominations, Prinedoms, Virtues,  
Powers.

Essential Powers; nor by his reign obscured, 841  
But more illustrious made; since he the head  
One of our number thus reduced becomes;  
His laws our laws; all honor to him done  
Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,  
And tempt not these; but hasten to appease  
The incensed Father, and the incensed Son,  
While pardon may be found, in time besought.'

"So spake the fervent Angel; but his zeal  
None seconded, as out of season judged, 850  
Or singular and rash, whereat rejoiced  
The Apostate, and more haughty thus replied:

"That we were formed then sayest thou? and  
the work  
Of secondary hands, by task transferred  
From Father to his Son? strange point, and new!  
Doctrine which we would know whence learned.  
Who saw

When this creation was? rememberest thou  
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?  
We know no time when we were not as now;  
Know none before us, self-begot, self-raised 860  
By our own quickening power, when fatal course  
Had circled his full orb, the birth mature  
Of this our native Heaven, ethereal sons.  
Our puissance is our own; our own right-hand  
Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try  
Who is our equal. Then thou shalt behold  
Whether by supplication we intend  
Address, and to begirt the almighty throne  
Beseeching or besieging. This report,  
These tidings carry to the anointed King; 870  
And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.'

"He said; and, as the sound of waters deep,  
Hoarse murmur echoed to his words applause  
Through the infinite host; nor less for that  
The flaming Seraph, fearless though alone,  
Encircled round with foes, thus answered bold:

"O alienate from God! O Spirit accursed,  
Forsaken of all good! I see thy fall

Determined, and thy hapless crew involved  
In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread      880  
Both of thy crime and punishment. Henceforth  
No more be troubled how to quit the yoke  
Of God's Messiah; those indulgent laws  
Will not be now vcuchsafed; other decrees  
Against thee are gone forth without recall;  
That golden sceptre which thou didst reject,  
Is now an iron rod to bruise and break  
Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise;  
Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly  
These wicked tents devoted, lest the wrath      890  
Impendent, raging into sudden flaine,  
Distinguish not; for soon expect to feel  
His thunder on thy head, devouring fire.  
Then who created thee lamenting learn,  
When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know.'

"So spake the Seraph Abdiel, faithful found  
Among the faithless, faithful only he;  
Among innumerable false, unmoved,  
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified  
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;      900  
Nor number, nor example with him wrought  
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,  
Though single. From amidst them forth he  
passed,  
Long way through hostile scorn, which he  
sustained

Superior, nor of violence feared aught;  
And, with retorted scorn, his back he turned  
On those proud towers, to swift destruction  
doomed.

## PARADISE LOST.

### BOOK VI.

#### THE ARGUMENT.

RAPHAEL continues to relate how Michael and Gabriel were sent forth to battle against Satan and his Angels. The first fight described: Satan and his Powers retire under night: he calls a council, invents devilish engines, which in the second day's fight put Michael and his Angels to some disorder: but they at length, pulling up mountains, overwhelmed both the force and machines of Satan: yet the tumult not so ending, God on the third day sends MESSIAH his Son, for whom he had reserved the glory of that victory: he, in the power of his Father, coming to the place, and causing all his legions to stand still on either side, with his chariot and thunder driving into the midst of his enemies, pursues them unable to resist toward the wall of Heaven; which opening, they leap down with horror and confusion into the place of punishment prepared for them in the Deep: MESSIAH returns with triumph to his Father.

ALL night the dreadless Angel, unpursued,  
Through Heaven's wide champaign, held his  
way, till Morn,  
Waked by the circling Hours, with rosy hand,  
Unbarred the gates of light. There is a cave  
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne,  
Where Light and Darkness is perpetual round

Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes  
through Heaven

Grateful vicissitude, like day and night;  
Light issues forth, and at the other door  
Obsequious Darkness enters, till her hour      10  
To veil the heaven; through darkness there  
might well

Seem twilight here. And now went forth the  
Morn

Such as in highest Heaven, arrayed in gold  
Empyreal; from before her vanished Night,  
Shot through with orient beams; when all the  
plain,

Covered with thick embattled squadrons bright,  
Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,  
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view.  
War he perceived, war in procinct, and found  
Already known what he for news had thought    20  
To have reported; gladly then he mixed  
Among those friendly Powers, who him received  
With joy and acclamations loud, that one,  
That of so many myriads fallen yet one,  
Returned not lost. On to the sacred hill  
They led him high applauded, and present  
Before the seat supreme, from whence a voice  
From midst a golden cloud thus mild was heard:

“Servant of God, well done; well hast thou  
fought

The better fight, who single hast maintained 30  
Against revolted multitudes the cause  
Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms;  
And for the testimony of truth hast borne  
Universal reproach, far worse to bear  
Than violence; for this was all thy care  
To stand approved in sight of God, though  
worlds

Judged thee perverse. The easier conquest now  
Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,  
Back on thy foes more glorious to return  
Than scorned thou didst depart, and to subdue 40  
By force who reason for their law refuse,  
Right reason for their law, and for their King  
Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.—  
Go, Michael, of celestial armies prince,  
And thou in military prowess next,  
Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons  
Invincible; lead forth my armed Saints,  
By thousands and by millions, ranged for fight,  
Equal in number to that godless crew  
Rebellious; them with fire and hostile arms 50  
Fearless assault, and, to the brow of Heaven  
Pursuing, drive them out from God and bliss,  
Into their place of punishment, the gulf  
Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide  
His fiery chaos to receive their fall.'

"So spake the sovran voice, and clouds began

To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll  
In dusky wreaths reluctant flames, the sign  
Of wrath awaked; nor with less dread the loud  
Ethereal trumpet from on high gan blow:     60  
At which command the Powers militant,  
That stood for Heaven, in mighty quadrate joined  
Of union irresistible, moved on  
In silence their bright legions, to the sound  
Of instrumental harmony, that breathed  
Heroic ardor to adventurous deeds,  
Under their godlike leaders, in the cause  
Of God and his Messiah. On they move  
Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,  
Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream divides  
Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground 71  
Their march was, and the passive air up-bore  
Their nimble tread: as when the total kind  
Of birds, in orderly array on wing,  
Came, summoned over Eden, to receive  
Their names of thee. So over many a tract  
Of Heaven they marched, and many a province  
wide,  
Tenfold the length of this terrene. At last,  
Far in the horizon to the north, appeared  
From skirt to skirt a fiery region stretched     80  
In battailous aspect; and, nearer view,  
Bristled with upright beams innumerable  
Of rigid spears, and helmets thronged, and shields

Various, with boastful argument portrayed,  
The banded Powers of Satan hastening on  
With furious expedition; for they weened  
That selfsame day, by fight or by surprise,  
To win the mount of God, and on his throne  
To set the envier of his state, the proud  
Aspirer; but their thoughts proved fond and  
vain

90

In the midway. Though strange to us it seemed  
At first that Angel should with Angel war,  
And in fierce hosting meet who wont to meet  
So oft in festivals of joy and love,  
Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire,  
Hymning the eternal Father; but the shout  
Of battle now began, and rushing sound  
Of onset ended soon each milder thought.

"High in the midst, exalted as a God,  
The Apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat, 100  
Idol of majesty divine, enclosed  
With flaming Cherubim and golden shields;  
Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now  
'Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,  
A dreadful interval, and front to front  
Presented stood, in terrible array  
Of hideous length. Before the cloudy van,  
On the rough edge of battle ere it joined,  
Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanced,  
Came towering, armed in adamant and gold. 110

Abdiel that sight endured not, where he stood  
Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,  
And thus his own undaunted heart explores:

“‘O Heaven! that such resemblance of the  
Highest

Should yet remain, where faith and realty  
Remain not! Wherefore should not strength  
and might

There fail where virtue fails, or weakest prove  
Where boldest, though to sight unconquerable?  
His puissance, trusting in the Almighty’s aid,  
I mean to try, whose reason I have tried      120  
Unsound and false. Nor is it aught but just,  
That he who in debate of truth hath won  
Should win in arms, in both disputes alike  
Victor; though brutish that contest and foul,  
When reason hath to deal with force, yet so  
Most reason is that reason overcome.

“So pondering, and from his armed peers  
Forth stepping opposite, half-way he met  
His daring foe, at this prevention more  
Incensed, and thus securely him defied:      \* 130

“‘Proud, art thou met? Thy hope was to  
have reached  
The highth of thy aspiring unopposed,  
The throne of God unguarded, and his side  
Abandoned at the terror of thy power  
Or potent tongue. Fool! not to think how vain

Against the Omnipotent to rise in arms;  
Who, out of smallest things, could without end  
Have raised incessant armies to defeat  
Thy folly; or with solitary hand,  
Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow 140  
Unaided could have finished thee, and whelmed  
Thy legions under darkness. But thou seest  
All are not of thy train; there be who faith  
Prefer, and piety to God, though then  
To thee not visible, when I alone  
Seemed in thy world erroneous to dissent  
From all; my sect thou seest. Now learn too late  
How few sometimes may know, when thousands  
err.'

"Whom the grand foe, with scornful eye askance,  
Thus answered:—'Ill for thee, but in wished  
hour 150

Of my revenge, first sought for, thou returnest  
From flight, seditious Angel! to receive  
Thy merited reward, the first assay  
Of this right-hand provoked, since first that tongue,  
Inspired with contradiction, durst oppose  
A third part of the Gods, in synod met  
Their deities to assert, who, while they feel  
Vigor divine within them, can allow  
Omnipotence to none. But well thou comest  
Before thy fellows, ambitious to win 160  
From me some plume, that thy success may shew

Destruction to the rest. This pause between—  
Unanswered lest thou boast—to let thee know . . .  
At first I thought that liberty and Heaven  
To heavenly souls had been all one; but now  
I see that most through sloth had rather serve,  
Ministering Spirits, trained up in feast and song.  
Such hast thou armed, the minstrelsy of Heaven,  
Servility with freedom to contend,  
As both their deeds compared this day shall prove.'

"To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern replied: 171  
'Apostate! still thou errest, nor end wilt find  
Of erring, from the path of truth remote.  
Unjustly thou depravest it with the name  
Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains,  
Or Nature. God and Nature bid the same,  
When he who rules is worthiest, and excels  
Them whom he governs. This is servitude,  
To serve the unwise, or him who hath rebelled  
Against his worthier, asthine now serve thee, 180  
Thyself not free, but to thyself enthralled;  
Yet lewdly darest our ministering upbraid.  
Reign thou in Hell, thy kingdom; let me serve  
In Heaven God ever blest, and his divine  
Behests obey, worthiest to be obeyed.  
Yet chains in Hell, not realms, expect; meanwhile  
From me returned, as erst thou saidst, from flight.  
This greeting on thy impious crest receive.'

"So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,

Which hung not, but so swift with tempest  
fell 190

On the proud crest of Satan, that no slight,  
Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield,  
Such ruin intercept. Ten paces huge  
He back recoiled ; the tenth on bended knee  
His massy spear unstayed ; as if on earth  
Winds underground, or waters forcing way,  
Sidelong had pushed a mountain from his seat,  
Half-stunk with all his pines. Amazement seized  
The rebel Thrones, but greater rage, to see  
Thus foiled their mightiest ; ours joy filled, and  
shout,

Presage of victory, and fierce desire 201  
Of battle ; whereat Michaël bid sound  
The Archangel-trumpet. Through the vast of  
Heaven

It sounded, and the faithful armies rung  
Hosanna to the Highest ; nor stood at gaze  
The adverse legions, nor less hideous joined  
The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,  
And clamor such as heard in Heaven till now  
Was never ; arms on armor clashing brayed  
Horrible discord, and the madding wheels 210  
Of brazen chariots raged ; dire was the noise  
Of conflict ; overhead the dismal hiss  
Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,  
And flying vaulted either host with fire.

So under fiery cope together rushed  
Both battles main, with ruinous assault  
And inextinguishable rage ; all Heaven  
Resounded, and, had Earth been then, all Earth  
Had to her centre shook. What wonder ! when  
Millions of fierce encountering Angels fought 220  
On either side, the least of whom could wield  
These elements, and arm him with the force  
Of all their regions. How much more of power,  
Army against army, numberless to raise  
Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb,  
Though not destroy, their happy native seat !  
Had not the eternal King omnipotent,  
From his strong hold of Heaven, high over-ruled  
And limited their might ; though numbered such  
As each divided legion might have seemed 230  
A numerous host, in strength each armed hand  
A legion ; led in fight, yet leader seemed  
Each warrior single as in chief, expert  
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway  
Of battle, open when, and when to close  
The ridges of grim war. No thought of flight,  
None of retreat ; no unbecoming deed  
That argued fear ; each on himself relied,  
As only in his arm the moment lay  
Of victory. Deeds of eternal fame 240  
Were done, but infinite ; for wide was spread  
That war and various; sometimes on firm ground

A standing fight, then soaring on main wing  
Tormented all the air; all air seemed then  
Conflicting fire.—Long time in even scale  
The battle hung; till Satan, who that day  
Prodigious power had shewn, and met in arms  
No equal, ranging through the dire attack  
Of fighting Seraphim confused, at length  
Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and felled  
Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed  
sway

251

Brandished aloft the horrid edge came down,  
Wide wasting: such destruction to withstand  
He hasted, and opposed the rocky orb  
Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,  
A vast circumference. At his approach  
The great Archangel from his warlike toil  
Surceased, and glad, as hoping here to end  
Intestine war in Heaven, the arch-foe subdued  
Or captive dragged in chains, with hostile  
frown

260

And visage all inflamed first thus began:

“ ‘Author of evil unknown till thy revolt,  
Unnamed in Heaven, now plenteous, as thou seest  
These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,  
Though heaviest by just measure on thyself  
And thy adherents; how hast thou disturbed  
Heaven’s blessed peace, and into Nature brought  
Misery, uncreated till the crime

Of thy rebellion! How hast thou instilled  
Thy malice into thousands, once upright      270  
And faithful, now proved false! But think not  
here

To trouble holy rest. Heaven casts thee out  
From all her confines; Heaven, the seat of bliss,  
Brooks not the works of violence and war.  
Hence then, and evil go with thee along,  
Thy offspring, to the place of evil, Hell,  
Thou and thy wicked crew—there mingle broils—  
Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,  
Or some more sudden vengeance, winged from God  
Precipitate thee with augmented pain.'      280

"So spake the prince of Angels; to whom thus  
The Adversary:—'Nor think thou with wind  
Of airy threats to awe whom yet with deeds  
Thou canst not. Hast thou turned the least of  
these

To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise  
Unvanquished, easier to transact with me  
That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with  
threats

To chase me hence? Err not, that so shall end  
The strife which thou callest evil, but we style  
The strife of glory; which we mean to win,      290  
Or turn this Heaven itself into the Hell  
Thou fablest; here however to dwell free,  
If not to reign. Meanwhile thy utmost force,

And join him named Almighty to thy aid,  
I fly not, but have sought thee far and nigh.'

"They ended parle, and both addressed for fight  
Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue  
Of Angels, can relate, or to what things  
Likен on earth conspicuous, that may lift  
Human imagination to such highth      300  
Of godlike power? for likest Gods they seemed,  
Stood they or moved, in stature, motion, arms,  
Fit to decide the empire of great Heaven.

Now waved their fiery swords, and in the air  
Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields  
Blazed opposite, while Expectation stood  
In horror. From each hand with speed retired,  
Where erst was thickest fight, the angelic throng,  
And left large field, unsafe within the wind  
Of such commotion; such as, to set forth      310  
Great things by small, if, Nature's concord broke,  
Among the constellations war were sprung,  
Two planets, rushing from aspect malign  
Of fiercest opposition, in mid sky  
Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound.  
Together both, with next to almighty arm  
Uplifted imminent, one stroke they aimed  
That might determine, and not need repeat,  
As not of power at once; nor odds appeared  
In might or swift prevention. But the sword      320  
Of Michael, from the armory of God,

Was given him tempered so, that neither keen  
Nor solid might resist that edge : it met  
The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite  
Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor stayed,  
But, with steep wheel reverse, deep entering  
shared

All his right side; then Satan first knew pain,  
And writhed him to and fro convolved; so sore  
The griding sword with discontinuous wound  
Passed through him. But the ethereal sub-  
stance closed,

330

Not long divisible; and from the gash  
A stream of nectarous humor issuing flowed  
Sanguine, such as celestial Spirits may bleed,  
And all his armor stained, erewhile so bright.  
Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run  
By Angels many and strong, who interposed  
Defense, while others bore him on their shields  
Back to his chariot, where it stood retired  
From off the files of war; there they him laid  
Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and  
shame,

340

To find himself not matchless, and his pride  
Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath  
His confidence to equal God in power.  
Yet soon he healed; for Spirits that livethroughout  
Vital in every part, not as frail man  
In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,

Cannot but by annihilating die;  
Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound  
Receive, no more than can the fluid air.  
All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear, 350  
All intellect, all sense, and as they please,  
They limb themselves, and color, shape, or size  
Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.

‘Meanwhile in other parts like deeds deserved  
Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,  
And with fierce ensigns pierced the deep array  
Of Moloch, furious king, who him defied,  
And at his chariot-wheels to drag him bound  
Threatened, nor from the Holy One of Heaven  
Refrained his tongue blasphemous; but anon, 360  
Down cloven to the waist, with shattered arms  
And uncouth pain fled bellowing. On each wing  
Uriel and Raphaël his vaunting foe,  
Though huge and in a rock of diamond armed,  
Vanquished Adramelech and Asmadai,  
Two potent Thrones, that to be less than Gods  
Disdained; but meaner thoughts learned in their  
flight,  
Mangled with ghastly wounds though plate and  
mail.  
Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy  
The atheist crew, but, with redoubled blow, 370  
Ariel, and Arioch, and the violence  
Of Ramiel, scorched and blasted, overthrew.

I might relate of thousands, and their names  
Eternize here on Earth; but those elect  
Angels, contented with their fame in Heaven,  
Seek not the praise of men: the other sort,  
In might though wondrous and in acts of war,  
Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom  
Cancelled from Heaven and sacred memory,  
Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell; 380  
For strength, from truth divided and from just,  
Illaudable, nought merits but dispraise  
And ignominy, yet to glory aspires,  
Vainglorious, and through infamy seeks fame:  
Therefore eternal silence be their doom.

"And now, their mightiest quelled, the battle  
swerved,  
With many an inroad gored ; deformed rout  
Entered, and foul disorder ; all the ground  
With shivered armor strown, and on a heap  
Chariot and charioteer lay overturned, 390  
And fiery foaming steeds ; what stood recoiled,  
O'er-wearied, through the faint Satanic host,  
Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surprised,  
Then first with fear surprised and sense of pain,  
Fled ignominous, to such evil brought  
By sin of disobedience, till that hour  
Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.  
Far otherwise the inviolable Saints,  
In cubic phalanx firm, advanced entire,

Invulnerable, impenetrably armed ; 400  
Such high advantages their innocence  
Gave them above their foes; not to have sianed,  
Not to have disobeyed ; in fight they stood  
Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pained  
By wound, though from their place by violence  
moved.

"Now Nighther course began, and, over Heaven  
Inducing darkness, grateful truce imposed,  
And silence on the odious din of war.  
Under her cloudy covert both retired,  
Victor and vanquished. On the foughten field 410  
Michaël and his Angels prevalent  
Encamping placed in guard their watches round,  
Cherubic waving fires ; on the other part,  
Satan with his rebellious disappeared,  
Far in the dark dislodged ; and, void of rest,  
His potentates to council called by night,  
And in the midst thus undismayed began :

" 'O now in danger tried, now known in arms  
Not to be overpowered, companions dear,  
Found worthy not of liberty alone, 420  
Too mean pretense, but what we more affect  
Honor, dominion, glory, and renown,  
Who have sustained one day in doubtful fight  
—And if one day, why not eternal days?—  
What Heaven's Lord had powerfulest to send  
Against us from about his throne, and judged

Sufficient to subdue us to his will,  
But proves not so ; then fallible, it seems,  
Of future we may deem him, though till now  
Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly  
    armed,

43c

Some disadvantage we endured and pain,  
Till now not known, but known, as soon contemned;  
Since now we find this our empyreal form  
Incapable of mortal injury,  
Imperishable, and, though pierced with wound,  
Soon closing, and by native vigor healed.  
Of evil then so small as easy think  
The remedy. Perhaps more valid arms,  
Weapons more violent, when next we meet,  
May serve to better us and worse our foes,     440  
Or equal what between us made the odds,  
In nature none. If other hidden cause  
Left them superior, while we can preserve  
Unhurt our minds and understanding sound,  
Due search and consultation will disclose.'

"He sat; and in the assembly next up-stood  
Nisroch, of Principalities the prime.  
As one he stood escaped from cruel fight,  
Sore toiled, his riven arms to havoc hewn,  
And cloudy in aspect thus answering spake:     450  
    "Deliverer from new Lords, leader to free  
Enjoyment of our right as Gods; yet hard  
For Gods, and too unequal work, we find

Against unequal arms to fight in pain,  
Against unpained, impassive; from which evil  
Ruin must needs ensue. For what avails  
Valor or strength, though matchless, quelled  
with pain

Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands  
Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we may well  
Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine, 460  
But live content, which is the calmest life;  
But pain is perfect misery, the worst  
Of evils, and excessive overturns  
All patience. He who therefore can invent  
With what more forcible we may offend  
Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm  
Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves  
No less than for deliverance what we owe.'

"Whereto with look composed Satan replied:  
'Not uninvented that, which thou aright 470  
Believest so main to our success, I bring.—

Which of us who beholds the bright surface  
Of this ethereous mould whereon we stand,  
This continent of spacious Heaven, adorned  
With plant, fruit, flower ambrosial, gems and  
gold;

Whose eye so superficially surveys  
These things as not to mind from whence they  
grow,  
Deep underground, materials dark and crude

Of spiritous and fiery spume, till, touched  
With Heaven's ray and tempered, they shoot  
forth

480

So beauteous, opening to the ambient light?  
These in their dark nativity the deep  
Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal flame;  
Which into hallow engines long and round  
Thick rammed, at the other bore with touch of  
fire

Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth  
From far with thundering noise among our foes  
Such implements of mischief, as shall dash  
To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever stands  
Adverse, that they shall fear we have dis-  
armed

490

The Thunderer of his only dreaded bold.  
Nor long shall be our labor; yet ere dawn,  
Effect shall end our wish. Meanwhile revive;  
Abandon fear; to strength and counsel joined  
Think nothing hard, much less to be despaired.'

"He ended, and his words their drooping cheer  
Enlightened, and their languished hope revived.  
The invention all admired, and each how he  
To be the inventor missed; so easy it seemed  
Once found, which yet unfound most would have  
thought

500

Impossible. Yet haply of thy race,  
In future days, if malice should abound,

Some one intent on mischief, or inspired  
With devilish machination, might devise  
Like instrument to plague the sons of men,  
For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.

"Forthwith from council to the work they flew;  
None arguing stood; innumerable hands  
Were ready; in a moment up they turned  
With the celestial soil, and saw beneath 510  
The originals of Nature in their crude  
Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam  
They found, the mingled, and, with subtle art,  
Concocted and adusted, they reduced  
To blackest grain, and into store conveyed.  
Part hidden veins digged up—nor hath this Earth  
Entrails unlike—of mineral and stone,  
Whereof to found their engines and their balls  
Of missive ruin; part incentive reed  
Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire. 520  
So all ere day-spring, under conscious night,  
Secret they finished, and in order set,  
With silent circumspection unespied.

"Now when fair Morn orient in Heaven appeared  
Up-rose the victor Angels, and to arms  
The matin-trumpet sung; in arms they stood  
Of golden panoply, resplendent host,  
Soon banded; others from the dawning hills  
Looked round, and scouts each coast light-armed  
scour,

Each quarter, to deservy the distant foe,        530  
Where lodged, or whither fled, or if for fight,  
In motion or in halt. Him soon they met  
Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in slow  
But firm battalion. Back with speediest sail  
Zophiel, of Cherubim the swiftest wing,  
Came flying, and in mid-air aloud thus cried :

“ ‘Arm, warriors, arm for fight! The foe at hand,  
Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit  
This day; fear not his flight! so thick a cloud  
He comes, and settled in his face I see        540  
Sad resolution and secure. Let each  
His adamantine coat gird well, and each  
Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orb'd shield,  
Borne even or high; for this day will pour down,  
If I conjecture aught, no drizzling shower,  
But rattling storm of arrows barbed with fire.’

“ So warned he them, aware themselves, and  
soon

In order, quit of all impediment;  
Instant without disturb they took alarm,  
And onward moved embattled: when behold, 550  
Not distant far, with heavy pace the foe  
Approaching gross and huge, in hollow cube  
Training his devilish enginery, impaled  
On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,  
To hide the fraud. At interview both stood  
Awhile; but suddenly at head appeared

Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud :

“ ‘Vanguard, to right and left! the front unfold!  
That all may see who hate us how we seek  
Peace and composure, and with open breast 560  
Stand ready to receive them, if they like  
Our overture, and turn not back perverse :  
But that I doubt. However witness, Heaven!  
Heaven witness thou anon, while we discharge  
Freely our part. Ye who appointed stand,  
Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch  
What we propound, and loud that all may hear.’

“So scoffing in ambiguous words he scarce  
Had ended, when to right and left the front  
Divided, and to either flank retired; 570  
Which to our eyes discovered, new and strange,  
A triple mounted row of pillars laid  
On wheels—for like to pillars most they seemed,  
Or hollowed bodies made of oak or fir,  
With branches lopt, in wood or mountain felled—  
Brass, iron, stony mould, had not their mouths  
With hideous orifice gaped on us wide,  
Portending hollow truce. At each behind  
A Seraph stood, and in his hand a reed  
Stood waving, tipped with fire; while we,  
suspense,

Collected stood within our thoughts amused; 581  
Not long, for sudden all at once their reeds  
Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied

With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame  
But soon obscured with smoke, all Heaven  
appeared,  
From those deep-throated engines belched, whose  
roar

Embowelled with outrageous noise the air,  
And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul  
Their devilish glut, chained thunderbolts and hail  
Of iron globes; which, on the victor host 590  
Levelled, with such impetuous fury smote  
That whom they hit none on their feet might  
stand,

Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell  
By thousands, Angel on Archangel rolled;  
The sooner for their arms; unarmed, they might  
Have easily as Spirits evaded swift,  
By quick contraction or remove; but now  
Foul dissipation followed and forced rout;  
Nor served it to relax their serried files.

What should they do? If on they rushed, repulse  
Repeated, and indecent overthrow 601  
Doubled, would render them yet more despised,  
And to their foes a laughter; for in view  
Stood ranked of Seraphim another row,  
In posture to displode their second tire  
Of thunder: back defeated to return  
They worse abhorred. Satan beheld their plight,  
And to his mates thus in derision called:

" 'O friends, why come not on these victors  
proud?

Erewhile they fierce were coming; and when we,  
To entertain them fair with open front      611  
And breast—what could we more?—propounded  
terms

Of composition, straight they changed their  
minds,

Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,  
As they would dance. Yet for a dance they seemed  
Somewhat extravagant and wild; perhaps  
For joy of offered peace. But I suppose  
If our proposals once again were heard,  
We should compel them to a quick result.'

"To whom thus Belial, in like gamesome mood:  
'Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,  
Of hard contents, and full of force, urged  
home,      622

Such as we might perceive amused them all,  
And stumbled many. Who receives them right  
Had need from head to foot well understand;  
Not understood, this gift they have besides,  
They shew us when our foes walk not upright.'

"So they among themselves in pleasant vein  
Stood scoffing, hightened in their thoughts  
beyond

All doubt of victory; Eternal Might      630  
To match with their inventions they presumed

So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,  
And all his host derided, while they stood  
Awhile in trouble. But they stood not long;  
Rage prompted them at length, and found them  
    arms

Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.  
Forthwith—behold the excellence, the power,  
Which God hath in his mighty Angels placed!—  
Their arms away they threw, and to the hills  
—For Earth hath this variety from Heaven 640  
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale—

Light as the lightning-glimpse, they ran, they flew;  
From their foundations loosening to and fro  
They plucked the seated hills, with all their load,  
Rocks, waters, woods, and by their shaggy tops  
Uplifting bore them in their hands. Amaze,  
Be sure, and terror seized the rebel host,  
When coming toward them so dread they saw  
The bottom of the mountains upward turned;  
Till on those cursed engines' triple row 650  
They saw them whelmed, and all their confidence  
Under the weight of mountains buried deep;  
Themselves invaded next, and on their heads  
Main promontories flung, which in the air  
Came shadowing, and oppressed whole legions  
    armed.

Their armor helped their harm, crushed-in and  
bruised

Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain  
Implacable, and many a dolorous groan,  
Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind  
Out of such prison; though Spirits of purest light,  
Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown. 661  
The rest, in imitation, to like arms  
Betook them, and the neighboring hills up-tore;  
So hills amid the air encountered hills,  
Hurled to and fro with jaculation dire,  
That underground they fought in dismal shade;  
Infernal noise; war seemed a civil game  
To this uproar; horrid confusion heaped  
Upon confusion rose. And now all Heaven  
Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread, 670  
Had not the Almighty Father, where he sits  
Shrined in his sanctuary of Heaven secure,  
Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen  
This tumult, and permitted all, advised,  
That his great purpose he might so fulfil,  
To honor his anointed Son avenged  
Upon his enemies, and to declare  
All power on him transferred. Whence to his Son,  
The assessor of his throne, he thus began:

“ ‘Effulgence of my glory, Son beloved, 680  
Son in whose face invisible is beheld  
Visibly what by Deity I am,  
And in whose hand what by decree I do,  
Second Omnipotence! two days are past,

Two days, as we compute the days of Heaven,  
Since Michael and his powers went forth to tame  
These disobedient. Sore hath been their fight,  
As likeliest was when two such foes met armed:  
For to themselves I left them; and, thou knowest,  
Equal in their creation they were formed, 690  
Save what sin hath impaired, which yet hath  
wrought

Insensibly, for I suspend their doom;  
Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last  
Endless, and no solution will be found.  
War wearied hath performed what War can do,  
And to disordered Rage let loose the reins,  
With mountains as with weapons armed, which  
makes

Wild work in Heaven, and dangerous to the main.  
Two days are therefore past, the third is thine;  
For thee I have ordained it, and thus far 700  
Have suffered, that the glory may be thine  
Of ending this great war, since none but thou  
Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace  
Immense I have transfused, that all may know  
In Heaven and Hell thy power above compare;  
And this perverse commotion governed thus,  
To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir  
Of all things, to be Heir and to be King  
By sacred unction, thy deserved right.

Go then, thou Mightiest, in thy Father's  
might, 710

Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels  
That shake Heaven's basis, bring forth all my war,  
My bow and thunder, my almighty arms  
Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh ;  
Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out  
From all Heaven's bounds into the upper Deep :  
There let them learn, as likes them, to despise  
God and Messiah his anointed King.'

"He said, and on his Son with rays direct  
Shone full ; he all his Father full expressed 720  
Ineffably into his face received ;  
And thus the filial Godhead answering spake :

" 'O Father, O Supreme of heavenly Thrones,  
First, Highest, Holiest, Best, thou always seekest  
To glorify thy Son, I always thee,  
As is most just. This I my glory account,  
My exaltation, and my whole delight,  
That thou in me well pleased declarest thy will  
Fulfilled, which to fulfil is all my bliss.  
Sceptre and power, thy giving, I assume, 730  
And gladlier shall resign when in the end  
Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee  
For ever, and in me all whom thou lovest :  
But whom thou hatest I hate, and can put on  
Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,  
Image of thee in all things ; and shall soon,

Armed with thy might, rid Heaven of these rebelled,  
To their prepared ill mansion driven down,  
To chains of darkness, and the undying worm,  
That from thy just obedience could revolt, 740  
Whom to obey is happiness entire.

Then shall thy Saints unmixed, and from the  
impure

Far separate, circling thy holy mount  
Unfeigned Hallelujahs to thee sing,  
Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief'

"So said he, o'er his sceptre bowing, rose  
From the right hand of glory where he sat ;  
And the third sacred morn began to shine,  
Dawning through Heaven. Fört rushed with  
whirlwind-sound

The chariot of Paternal Deity, 750  
Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel,  
undrawn,

Itself instinct with spirit, but convoyed  
By four cherubic shapes. Four faces each  
Had wonderous ; as with stars their bodies all  
And wings were set with eyes, with eyes the wheels  
Of beryl, and careering fires between ;  
Over their heads a crystal firmament,  
Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with pure  
Amber and colors of the showery arch.

He in celestial panoply all armed 760  
Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,

Ascended ; at his right hand Victory  
Sat eagle-winged ; beside him hung his bow  
And quiver, with three-bolted thunder stored,  
And from about him fierce effusion rolled  
Of smoke, and bickering flame, and sparkles dire.  
Attended with ten thousand thousand Saints,  
He onward came ; far off his coming shone ;  
And twenty thousand—I their number heard—  
Chariots of God, half on each hand, were seen. 770  
He on the wings of Cherub rode sublime,  
On the crystalline sky, in sapphire throned,  
Illustrious far and wide, but by his own  
First seen ; then unexpected joy surprised,  
When the great ensign of Messiah blazed,  
Aloft by Angels borne, his sign in Heaven;  
Under whose conduct Michael soon reduced  
His army, circumfused on either wing,  
Under their Head embodied all in one.  
Before him Power divine his way prepared; 780  
At his command the uprooted hills retired,  
Each to his place; they heard his voice and went  
Obsequious; Heaven his wonted face renewed,  
And with fresh flowerets hill and valley smiled  
This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdured,  
And to rebellious fight rallied their Powers,  
Insensate, hope conceiving from despair;  
In heavenly Spirits could such perverseness dwell?  
But to convince the proud what signs avail,

Or wonders move the obdurate to relent? 790  
They, hardened more by what might most reclaim,  
Grieving to see his glory, at the sight  
Took envy; and, aspiring to his hight,  
Stood re-imbattled fierce, by force or fraud  
Weening to prosper, and at length prevail  
Against God and Messiah, or to fall  
In universal ruin last; and now  
To final battle drew, disdaining flight,  
Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God  
To all his host on either hand thus spake: 800  
    "Stand still in bright array, ye Saints; here  
        stand,  
Ye Angels armed; this day from battle rest.  
Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God  
Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause;  
And as ye have received, so have ye done,  
Invincibly; but of this cursed crew  
The punishment to other hand belongs;  
Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints.  
Number to this day's work is not ordained,  
Nor multitude; stand only, and behold 810  
God's indignation on these godless poured  
By me; not you, but me, they have despised,  
Yet envied; against me is all their rage,  
Because the Father, to whom, in Heaven supreme,  
Kingdom, and power, and glory appertains,  
Hath honored me, according to his will.

Therefore to me their doom he hath assigned;  
That they may have their wish, to try with me  
In battle which the stronger proves; they all,  
Or I alone against them; since by strength 820  
They measure all, of other excellency  
Not emulous, nor care who them excels;  
Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.'

"So spake the Son, and into terror changed  
His countenance, too severe to be beheld,  
And full of wrath bent on his enemies.

At once the Four spread out their starry wings,  
With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs  
Of his fierce chariot rolled, as with the sound  
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host. 830

He on his impious foes right onward drove,  
Gloomy as night; under his burning wheels  
The steadfast Empyrean shook throughout,  
All but the throne itself of God. Full soon  
Among them he arrived, in his right-hand  
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent  
Before him, such as in their souls infix'd  
Plagues; they, astonished, all resistance lost,  
All courage; down their idle weapons cropt;  
O'er shields, and helms, and helmed heads he rode  
O'er Thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate, 841

That wished the mountains now might be again  
Thrown on them, as a shelter from his ire.

Nor less on either side tempestuous fell  
His arrows, from the fourfold-visaged Four  
Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels  
Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;  
One spirit in them ruled, and every eye  
Glared lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire  
Among the accursed, that withered all their  
strength

And of their wonted vigor left them drained, 851  
Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen.

Yet half his strength he put not forth, but checked  
His thunder in mid-volley; for he meant  
Not to destroy, but root them out of Heaven.

The overthrown he raised, and, as a herd  
Of goats or timorous flock, together thronged,  
Drove them before him thunderstruck, pursued  
With terrors and with furies, to the bounds  
And mystal wall of Heaven, which, opening wide,  
Rolled inward, and a spacious gap disclosed 861  
Into the wasteful Deep. The monstrous sight  
Struck them with horror backward, but far worse  
Urged them behind; headlong themselves they  
threw

Down from the verge of Heaven; eternal wrath  
Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.

"Hell heard the unsufferable noise, Hell saw  
Heaven ruining from Heaven, and would have fled  
Affrighted; but strict Fate had cast too deep

Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound. 870  
Nine days they fell; confounded Chaos roared,  
And felt tenfold confusion in their fall  
Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout  
Encumbered him with ruin; Hell at last  
Yawning received them whole, and on them  
closed;

Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire  
Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.  
Disburdened Heaven rejoiced, and soon repaired  
Her mural breach, returning whence it rolled.  
Sole victor, from the expulsion of his foes, 880  
Messiah his triumphal chariot turned.

To meet him all his Saints, who silent stood  
Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,  
With jubilee advanced; and as they went,  
Shaded with branching palm, each Order bright,  
Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,  
Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion given,  
Worthiest to reign. He celebrated rode,  
Triumphant through mid-Heaven, into the courts  
And temple of his mighty Father throned 890  
On high; who into glory him received,  
Where now he sits, at the right-hand of bliss.

"Thus, measuring things in Heaven by things  
on Earth,

At thy request, and that thou mayest beware  
By what is past, to thee I have revealed

What might have else to human race been hid;  
The discord which befell, and war in Heaven  
Among the angelic Powers, and the deep fall  
Of those too high aspiring, who rebelled  
With Satan; he who envies now thy state, 900  
Who now is plotting how he may seduce  
Thee also from obedience, that, with him  
Bereaved of happiness, thou mayest partake  
His punishment, eternal misery;  
Which would be all his solace and revenge,  
As a despite done against the Most High,  
Thee once to gain companion of his woe.  
But listen not to his temptations; warn  
Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard,  
By terrible example, the reward 910  
Of disobedience. Firm they might have stood,  
Yet fell; remember, and fear to transgress."

## PARADISE LOST.

### BOOK VII.

#### THE ARGUMENT.

RAPHAEL, at the request of Adam, relates how and wherefore this World was first created; that God, after the expelling of Satan and his Angels out of Heaven, declared his pleasure to create another world, and other creatures to dwell therein; sends his Son with glory, and attendance of Angels, to perform the work of Creation in six days: the Angels celebrate with hymns the performance thereof, and his reascent into Heaven.

DESCEND from Heaven, Urania—by that name  
if rightly thou art called—whose voice divine  
Following, above the Olympian hill I soar,  
Above the flight of Pegasean wing!  
The meaning, not the name, I call; for thou  
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top  
Of old Olympus dwellest; but, heavenly-born,  
Before the hills appeared or fountain flowed,  
Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,  
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play      10  
In presence of the Almighty Father, pleased

With thy celestial song. Up-ied by thee  
Into the Heaven-of heavens I have presumed,  
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,  
Thy tempering. With like safety guided down  
Return me to my native element;  
Lest, from this flying steed unreined—as once  
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime—  
Dismounted, on the Aleian field I fall,  
Erroneous there to wander and forlorn.—      20  
Half yet remains unsung, but, narrower bound,  
Within the visible diurnal sphere.

Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,  
More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchanged  
To hoarse or mute, though fallen on evil days,  
On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues,  
In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,  
And solitude; yet not alone, while thou  
Visitest my slumbers nightly, or when morn  
Purples the east. Still govern thou my song,    30  
Urania, and fit audience find, though few;  
But drive far off the barbarous dissonance  
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race  
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard  
In Rhodopè, where woods and rocks had ears  
To rapture, till the savage clamor drowned  
Both harp and voice; nor could the Muse defend  
Her son. So fail not thou who thee implores;  
For thou art heavenly, she an empty dream.

Say, Goddess, what ensued when Raphaël, 40  
The affable Archangel, had forewarned  
Adam, by dire example, to beware  
Apostasy, by what befell in Heaven  
To those apostates; lest the like befall  
In Paradise to Adam or his race,  
Charged not to touch the interdicted tree,  
If they transgress, and slight that sole command,  
So easily obeyed, amid the choice  
Of all tastes else to please their appetite,  
Though wandering. He, with his consorted  
Eve, 50  
The story heard attentive, and was filled  
With admiration and deep muse, to hear  
Of things so high and strange, things to their  
thought  
So unimaginable as hate in Heaven,  
And war so near the peace of God in bliss,  
With such confusion; but the evil, soon  
Driven back, redounded as a flood on those  
From whom it sprung, impossible to mix  
With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repealed  
The doubts that in his heart arose; and now 60  
Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know  
What nearer might concern him, how this World  
Of heaven and earth conspicuous first began;  
When, and whereof created; for what cause;  
What within Eden, or without, was done

Before his memory—as one, whose drought  
Yet scarce allayed, still eyes the current stream,  
Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites—  
Proceeded thus to ask his heavenly guest:

“Great things, and full of wonder in our  
ears,

70

Far differing from this World, thou hast revealed,  
Divine interpreter! by favor sent  
Down from the Empyrean, to forewarn  
Us timely of what might else have been our loss,  
Unknown, which human knowledge could not  
reach.

For which to the infinitely Good we owe  
Immortal thanks, and his admonishment  
Receive with solemn purpose, to observe  
Immutably his sovran will, the end  
Of what we are. But since thou hast vouch-  
safed

80

Gently, for our instruction, to impart  
Things abqve earthly thought, which yet  
concerned

Our knowing, as to highest Wisdom seemed,  
Deign to descend now lower, and relate,  
What may no less perhaps avail us known,  
How first began this heaven, which we behold  
Distant so high, with moving fires adorned  
Innumerable; and this which yields or fills  
All space, the ambient air, wide interfuse.

Embracing round this florid earth; what cause 90  
Moved the Creator, in his holy rest  
Through all eternity, so late to build  
In Chaos; and the work begun how soon  
Absolved: if unforbid thou mayest unfold  
What we not to explore the secrets ask  
Of his eternal empire, but the more  
To magnify his works, the more we know.  
And the great light of day yet wants to run  
Much of his race though steep. Suspense in  
heaven,  
Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears, 100  
And longer will delay to hear thee tell  
His generation, and the rising birth  
Of Nature from the unapparent Deep:  
Or if the star of evening and the moon  
Haste to thy audience, Night with her will bring  
Silence, and Sleep listening to thee will watch;  
Or we can bid his absence, till thy song  
End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine.”  
Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought;  
And thus the godlike Angel answered mild: 110  
“This also thy request, with caution asked,  
Obtain; though to recount almighty works  
What words or tongue of Seraph can suffice,  
Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?  
Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve  
To glorify the Maker, and infer

Thee also happier, shall not be withheld  
Thy hearing; such commission from above  
I have received, to answer thy desire  
Of knowledge within bounds; beyond abstain 120  
To ask, nor let thine own inventions hope  
Things not revealed, which the invisible King,  
Only omniscient, hath suppressed in night,  
To none communicable in Earth or Heaven;  
Enough is left besides to search and know.  
But knowledge is as food, and needs no less  
Her temperance over appetite, to know  
In measure what the mind may well contain;  
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns  
Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind. 130

"Know then, that after Lucifer from Heaven  
—So call him, brighter once amidst the host  
Of Angels, than that star the stars among—  
Fell with his flaming legions through the Deep  
Into his place, and the great Son returned  
Victorious with his Saints, the omnipotent,  
Eternal Father from his throne beheld  
Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake:

"At least our envious foe hath failed, who  
thought  
All like himself rebellious, by whose aid 140  
This inaccessible high strength, the seat  
Of Deity supreme, us dispossessed,  
He trusted to have seized, and into fraud

Drew many, whom their place knows here no more.  
 Yet far the greater part have kept, I see,  
 Their station; Heaven yet populous retains  
 Number sufficient to possess her realms,  
 Though wide, and this high temple to frequent  
 With ministeries due, and solemn rites.

But, lest his heart exalt him in the harm      150  
 Already done, to have dispeopled Heaven,  
 My damage fondly deemed, I can repair  
 That detriment, if such it be to lose  
 Self-lost, and in a moment will create  
 Another world, out of one man a race  
 Of men innumerable, there to dwell,  
 Not here; till, by degrees of merit raised,  
 They open to themselves at length the way  
 Up hither, under long obedience tried,  
 And Earth be changed to Heaven, and Heaven  
 to Earth,      160

One kingdom, joy and union without end.  
 Meanwhile inhabit lax, ye Powers of Heaven;  
 And thou my Word, begotten Son, by thee  
 This I perform; speak thou, and be it done!  
 My overshadowing Spirit and might with thee  
 I send along: ride forth, and bid the Deep  
 Within appointed bounds be heaven and earth—  
 Boundless the Deep, because I am to fill  
 Infinitude; nor vacuous the space,  
 Though I, uncircumscribed, myself retire,      170

And put not forth my goodness, which is free  
To act or not; necessity and chance  
Approach not me, and what I will is fate.'

"So spake the Almighty, and to what he spake  
His Word, the Filial Godhead, gave effect.  
Immediate are the acts of God, more swift  
Than time or motion, but to human ears  
Cainot without process of speech be told.  
So told as earthly notion can receive.

Great triumph and rejoicing was in Heaven, 180  
Whensuch was heard declared the Almighty's will;  
Glory they sung to the Most High, goodwill  
To future men, and in their dwellings peace ;  
Glory to Him whose just avenging ire  
Had driveu out the ungodly from his sight  
And the hahitations of the just ; to Him  
Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordained  
Good out of evil to create, instead  
Of Spirits malign a better race to bring  
Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse 190  
His good to worlds and ages infinite.

"So sang the Hierarchies. Meanwhile the Son  
On his great expedition now appeared,  
Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crowned  
Of majesty divine, sapience and love  
Immense, and all his Father in him shone.  
About his chariot numberless were poured  
Cherub and Seraph, Potentates and Thrones,

And Virtues, winged Spirits, and chariots winged,  
From the armory of God, where stand of old 200  
Myriads, between two brazen mountains lodged,  
Against a solemn day, harnessed at hand,  
Celestial equipage ; and now came forth  
Spontaneous, for within them Spirit lived,  
Attendant on their Lord. Heaven opened wide  
Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound  
On golden hinges moving, to let forth  
The King of Glory, in his powerful Word  
And Spirit coming to create new worlds.—  
On heavenly ground they stood, and from the  
shore

They viewed the vast immeasurable abyss, 211  
Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,  
Up from the bottom turned by furious winds  
And surging waves, as mountains, to assault  
Heaven's highth, and with the centre mix the pole.

“ ‘Silence, ye troubled waves, and thou Deep  
peace !’

Said then the omnific Word ; ‘your discord end !’  
Nor stayed, but, on the wings of Cherubim  
Up-lifted, in paternal glory rode  
Far into Chaos, and the World unborn ; 220  
For Chaos heard his voice. Him all his train  
Followed in bright procession, to behold  
Creation, and the wonders of his might.  
Then stayed the fervid wheels, and in his hand

He took the golden compasses, prepared  
In God's eternal store, to circumscribe  
This Universe, and all created things.  
One foot he centered, and the other turned  
Round through the vast profundity obscure,  
And said :—'Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,  
This be thy just circumference, O World !' 231

"Thus God the heaven created, thus the earth,  
Matter unformed and void. Darkness profound  
Covered the Abyss ; but on the watery calm  
His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread,  
And vital virtue infused and vital warmth,  
Throughout the fluid mass, but downward purged  
The black, tartareous, cold, infernal, dregs  
Adverse to life : then founded, then conglobed,  
Like things to like, the rest to several place 240  
Disparted, and between spun out the air,  
And Earth, self-balanced, on her centre hung.

" 'Let there be light !' said God, and forthwith  
light,  
Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,  
Sprung from the Deep, and from her native east  
To journey through the airy gloom began.  
Sphered in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun  
Was not; she in a cloudy tarbernacle  
Sojourned the while. God saw the light was good;  
And light from darkness by the hemisphere 250  
Divided. Light the Day, and darkness Night

He named. Thus was the first day even and morn;  
Nor passed uncelebrated, nor unsung  
By the celestial quires. When orient light  
Exhaling first from darkness they beheld,  
Birthday of heaven and earth, with joy and shout  
The hollow universal orb they filled,  
And touched their golden harps, and hymning  
praised

God and his works; Creator him they sung,  
Both when first evening was, and when first morn.

"Again, God said:—'Let there be firmament 261  
Amid the waters, and let it divide  
The waters from the waters!' And God made  
The firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,  
Transparent, elemental air, diffused  
In circuit to the uttermost convex  
Of this great round; partition firm and sure,  
The waters underneath from those above  
Dividing—for as Earth, so he the World  
Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide 270  
Crystalline ocean, and the loud misrule  
Of Chaos far removed, lest fierce extremes  
Contiguous might distemper the whole frame—  
And Heaven be named the firmament: so even  
And morning chorus sung the second day.

"The Earth was formed, but, in the womb as yet  
Of waters, embryon immature, involved,  
Appeared not; over all the face of Earth

Main ocean flowed, not idle, but, with warm  
Prolific humor softening all her globe, 280  
Fermented the great mother to conceive,  
Satiate with genial moisture; when God said:  
'Be gathered now, ye waters, under heaven  
Into one place, and yet dry land appear!'  
Immediately the mountains huge appear,  
Emergent, and their broad bare backs up-heave  
Into the clouds; their tops ascend the sky.  
So high as heaved the tumid hills, so low  
Down sunk a hollow bottom, broad and deep,  
Capacious bed of waters. Thither they 290  
Hasted with glad precipitance, up-rolled,  
As drops on dust conglobing, from the dry;  
Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,  
For haste: such flight the great command im-  
    pressed  
On the swift floods. As armies at the call  
Of trumpet—for of armies thou hast heard—  
Troop to their standard, so the watery throng,  
Wave rolling after wave, where way they found;  
If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,  
Soft-ebbing: nor withstood them rock or hill; 300  
But they, or underground, or circuit wide  
With serpent error wandering, found their way,  
And on the washy ooz deep channels wore;  
Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,  
All but within those banks, where rivers now

Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.--  
The dry land, Earth, and the great receptacle  
Of congregated waters he called Seas;  
And saw that it was good, and said:—‘Let the earth  
Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed,<sup>310</sup>  
And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,  
Whose seed is in herself upon the earth.’  
He scarce had said, when the bare earth, till then  
Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorned,  
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure  
clad  
Her universal face with pleasant green;  
Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flowered,  
Opening their various colors, and made gay  
Her bosom, smelling sweet; and, these scarce  
blown,  
Forth flourished thick the clustering vine, forth  
crept  
The swelling gourd, up stood the corny reed <sup>321</sup>  
Embattled in her field, and the humble shrub,  
And bush with frizzled hair implicit: last  
Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread  
Their branches hung with copious fruit, or  
gemmed  
Their blossoms. With high woods the hills were  
crowned,  
With tufts the valleys and each fountain-side,  
With borders long the rivers; that Earth now

Seemed liked to Heaven, a seat where Gods might  
dwell,

Or wander with delight, and love to haunt      330  
Hers sacred shades: though God had yet not rained  
Upon the earth, and man to till the ground.  
None was, but from the earth a dewy mist  
Went up and watered all the ground, and each  
Plant of the field, which ere it was in the earth  
God made, and every herb, before it grew  
On the green stem. God saw that it was good:  
So even and morn recorded the third day.

"Again the Almighty spake:—'Let there be  
lights

High in the expanse of heaven, to divide      340  
The day from night; and let them be for signs,  
For seasons, and for days, and circling years;  
And let them be for lights, as I ordain  
Their office in the firmament of heaven,  
To give light on the earth!' and it was so.  
And God made two great lights, great for their use  
To Man, the greater to have rule by day,  
The less by night, altern; and made the stars,  
And set them in the firmament of heaven  
To illuminate the earth, and rule the day      350  
In their vicissitude, and rule the night,  
And light from darkness to divide. God saw,  
Surveying his great work, that it was good.  
For, of celestial bodies first, the Sun

A mighty sphere he framed, unlightsome first,  
Though of ethereal mould; then formed the Moon  
Globose, and every magnitude of Stars,  
And sowed with stars the heaven, thick as a field.  
Of light by far the greater part he took,  
Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and  
placed

360

In the sun's orb, made porous to receive  
And drink the liquid light; firm to retain  
Her gathered beams, great palace now of light.  
Hither, as to their fountain, other stars  
Repairing in their golden urns draw light  
And hence the morning planet gilds her horns.  
By tincture or reflection they augment  
Their small peculiar, though, from human sight  
So far remote, with diminution seen.  
First in his east the glorious lamp was seen, 370  
Regent of day, and all the horizon round  
Invested with bright rays, jocund to run  
His longitude through heaven's high road; the  
gray

Dawn and the Pleiades before him danced,  
Shedding sweet influence. Less bright the moon,  
But opposite in levelled west, was set,  
His mirror, with full face borrowing her light  
From him; for other light she needed none  
In that aspect, and still that distance keeps

Till night; then in the east her turn she  
shines,

380

Revolved on heaven's great axle, and her reign  
With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,  
With thousand thousand stars, that then appeared  
Spangling the hemisphere. Then, first adorned  
With their bright luminaries that set and rose,  
Glad evening and glad morn crowned the fourth  
day.

"And God said:—'Let the waters generate  
Reptile with spawn abundant, living soul;  
And let fowl fly above the earth, with wings  
Displayed on the open firmament of heaven.' 390  
And God created the great whales, and each  
Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously  
The waters generated by their kinds,  
And every bird of wing after his kind;  
And saw that it was good, and blessed them,  
saying:

'Be fruitful, multiply, and, in the seas,  
And lakes, and running streams, the waters fill;  
And let the foul be multiplied on the earth!'  
Forth with the sounds and seas, each creek and bay,  
With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals 400  
Of fish that, with their fins and shining scales,  
Glide under the green wave, in sculls that oft  
Bank the mid-sea. Part, single or with mate,

Graze the seaweed, their pasture, and through  
groves

Of coral stray, or, sporting with quick glance,  
Shew to the sun their waved coats dropt with  
gold;

Or, in their pearly shells at ease, attend  
Moist nutriment; or under rocks their food  
In jointed armor watch; on smooth the seal  
And bended dolphins play; part, huge of  
bulk, 410

Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,  
Tempest the ocean. There leviathan,  
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep  
Stretched like a promontory, sleeps or swims,  
And seems a moving land, and at his gills  
Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out a sea.

Meanwhile the tepid caves, and fens, and  
shores,

Their brood as numerous hatch from the egg,  
that soon,

Bursting with kindly rupture, forth disclose 419  
Their callow young; but feathered soon and  
fledge

They summed their pens, and, soaring the air  
sublime,

With clang despised the ground, under a cloud  
In prospect. There the eagle and the stork,  
On cliffs and cedar-tops, their eyries build.

Part loosely wing the region, part more wise  
In common, ranged in figure, wedged their way,  
Intelligent of seasons, and set forth  
Their airy caravan, high over seas  
Flying, and over lands, with mutual wing  
Easing their flight—so steers the prudent  
crane

430

Her annual voyage, borne on winds—the air  
Floats as they pass, fanned with unnumbered  
plumes.

From branch to branch the smaller birds with  
song

Solaced the woods, and spread their painted  
wings,

Till even; nor then the solemn nightingale  
Ceased warbling, but all night tuned her soft  
lays.

Others, on silver lakes and rivers, bathed  
Their downy breast; the swan, with arched neck  
Between her white wings mantling, proudly rows  
Her state with oary feet; yet oft they quit 440  
The dank, and, rising on stiff pinions, tower  
The mid aerial sky. Others on ground  
Walked firm; the crested cock whose clarion  
sounds

The silent hours, and the other whose gay train  
Adorns him, colored with the florid hue  
On rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus

With fish replenished, and the air with fowl,  
Evening and morn solemnized the fifth day.

"The sixth, and of creation last, arose  
With evening harps and matin; when God  
said:

'Let the earth bring forth soul living in her kind,  
Cattle and creeping things, and beast of the earth,  
Each in their kind.' The earth obeyed, and  
straight,

Opening her fertile womb, teemed at a birth  
Innumerous living creatures, perfect forms,  
Limbed and full grown. Out of the ground up-  
rose,

As from his lair, the wild beast where he wons  
In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den  
—Among the trees in pairs they rose, they  
walked—

The cattle in the fields and meadows green: 460  
Those rare and solitary, these in flocks  
Pasturing at once, and in broad herds up-sprung.  
The grassy clods now calved; now half-appeared  
The tawny lion, pawing to get free  
His hinder parts, then springs, as broke from  
bonds,

And rampant shakes his brinded mane; the ounce,  
The libbard, and the tiger, as the mole,  
Rising the crumbled earth above them threw  
In hillocks; the swift stag from underground

Bore up his branching head; scarce from his mould  
Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheaved 471  
His vastness; fleeced the flocks and bleating rose,  
As plants; ambiguous between sea and land  
The river-horse and scaly crocodile.—

At once came forth whatever creeps the ground,  
Insect or worm. Those waved their limber fans  
For wings, and smallest lineaments exact  
In all the liveries decked of summer's pride,  
With spots of gold and purple, azure and green;  
These, as a line, their long dimensions drew, 480  
Streaking the ground with sinuous trace : not all  
Minims of nature; some of serpent kind,  
Wondrous in length and corpulence, involved  
Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept  
The parsimonious emmet, provident  
Of future, in small room large heart enclosed;  
Pattern of just equality perhaps  
Hereafter, joined in her popular tribes  
Of commonalty. Swarming next appeared  
The female bee, that feeds her husband drone 490  
Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells  
With honey stored. The rest are numberless  
And thou their nature knowest, and gavest them  
names,  
Needless to thee repeated; nor unknown  
The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field,  
Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes

And hairy mane terrific, though to thee  
Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.

"Now heaven in all her glory shone, and rolled  
Her motions, at the great First Mover's hand 500  
First wheeled their course; earth, in her rich  
attire

Consummate lovely, smiled; air, water, earth,  
By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was  
walked,

Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remained.  
There wanted yet the master-work, the end  
Of all yet done; a creature, who not prone  
And brute as other creatures, but endued  
With sanctity of reason might erect  
His stature, and, upright with front serene,  
Govern the rest, self-knowing, and from thence 510  
Magnanimous to correspond with Heaven,  
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good  
Descends; thither with heart, and voice, and eyes  
Directed in devotion, to adore  
And worship God supreme, who made him chief  
Of all his work: therefore the omnipotent  
Eternal Father—for where is not he  
Present?—thus to his Son audibly spake:

"Let us make now Man in our image, Man  
In our similitude, and let them rule 520  
Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,  
Beast of the field, and over all the earth,

And every creeping thing that creeps the ground.'  
This said, he formed thee, Adam, thee, O man,  
Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breathed  
The breath of life ; in his own image he  
Created thee, in the image of God  
Express, and thou becamest a living soul.

Male he created thee, but thy consort  
Female, for race ; then blessed mankind, and said :  
'Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth;      531  
Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold,  
Over fish of the sea, and fowl of the air,  
And every living thing that moves on the earth.'—  
Wherever thus created, for no place  
Is yet distinct by name, thence, as thou knowest,  
He brought thee into this delicious grove,  
This garden, planted with the trees of God,  
Delectable both to behold and taste;  
And freely all their pleasant fruit for food      540  
Gave thee; all sorts are here that all the earth  
yields,

Variety without end ; but of the tree,  
Which tasted works knowledge of good and evil,  
Thou mayest not ; in the day thou eatest, thou diest.  
Death is the penalty imposed ; beware,  
And govern well thy appetite, lest Sin  
Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death.

"Here finished he, and all that he had made  
Viewed, and behold ! all was entirely good.

So even and morn accomplished the sixth day ; 550  
Yet not till the Creator, from his work  
Desisting, though unwearied, up returned,  
Up to the Heaven-of-heavens, his high abode,  
Thence to behold this new created World  
The addition of his empire, how it shewed  
In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,  
Answering his great idea. Up he rode,  
Followed with acclamation and the sound  
Symphonious of ten thousand harps, that tuned  
Angelic harmonies. The earth, the air 560  
Resounded—thou rememberest, for thou heardest—  
The heavens and all the constellations rung,  
The planets in their stations listening stood,  
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.  
'Open, ye everlasting gates !' they sung,  
'Open, ye Heavens, your living doors ! Let in  
The great Creator from his work returned  
Magnificent, his six days' work, a world.  
Open, and henceforth oft ; for God will deign  
To visit oft the dwellings of just men, 570  
Delighted, and, with frequent intercourse,  
Thither will send his winged messengers  
On errands of supernal grace.' So sung  
The glorious train ascending. He through  
Heaven,  
That opened wide her blazing portals, led  
To God's eternal house direct the way,

A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold,  
And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,  
Seen in the Galaxy, that milky way,  
Which nightly as a circling zone thou seest 580  
Powdered with stars.—And now on Earth the  
seventh

Evening arose in Eden, for the sun  
Was set, and twilight from the east came on,  
Forerunning night; when at the holy mount  
Of Heaven's high-seated top, the imperial throne  
Of Godhead, fixed for ever firm and sure,  
The Filial Power arrived, and sat him down  
With his great Father; for he also went  
Invisible, yet stayed—such privilege  
Hath Omnipresence—and the work ordained, 590  
Author and end of all things, and, from work  
Now resting, blessed and hallowed the seventh  
day,

As resting on that day from all his work;  
But not in silence holy kept. The harp  
Had work and rested not; the solemn pipe  
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,  
All sounds on fret, by string or golden wire,  
Tempered soft tunings, intermixed with voice  
Choral or unison; of incense clouds,  
Fuming from golden censers, hid the mount. 600  
Creation and the six days' acts they sung:  
'Great are thy works, Jehovah! infinite

Thy power! what thought can measure thee, or  
tongue

Relate thee? greater now in thy return  
Than from the Giant-angels. Thee that day  
Thy thunders magnified; but to create  
Is greater than created to destroy.

Who can impare thee, mighty King, or bound  
Thy empire? Easily the proud attempt  
Of Spirits apostate, and their counsels vain, 610  
Thou hast repelled, while impiously they thought  
Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw  
The number of thy worshipers. Who seeks  
To lessen thee, against his purpose, serves  
To manifest the more thy might; his evil  
Thou uses, and from thence createst more good.  
Witness this new-made World, another Heaven  
From Heaven-gate not far, founded in view  
On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea;  
Of amplitude almost immense, with stars 620  
Numerous, and every star perhaps a world  
Of destined habitation; but thou knowest  
Their seasons. Among these the seat of men,  
Earth, with her nether ocean circumfused,  
Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy men,  
And sons of men! whom God hath thus advanced,  
Created in his image, there to dwell  
And worship him, and in reward to rule  
Over his works on earth, in sea, or air,

And multiply a race of worshipers                    630  
Holy and just; thrice happy if they know  
Their happiness, and persevere upright!"

"So sung they, and the Emipyrean rung  
With Hallelujahs; thus was Sabbath kept.  
And thy request think now fulfilled, that asked  
How first this World and face of things began,  
And what before thy memory was done  
From the beginning, that posterity  
Informed by thee might know. If else thou  
seekest  
Aught, not surpassing human measure," 640

## PARADISE LOST.

### BOOK VIII.

#### THE ARGUMENT.

ADAM inquires concerning celestial motions, is doubtfully answered, and exhorted to search rather things more worthy of knowledge: Adam assents, and still desirous to detain Raphael, relates to him what he remembered since his own creation, his placing in Paradise, his talk with God concerning solitude and fit society, his first meeting and nuptials with Eve, his discourse with the Angel thereupon; who after admonitions repeated departs.

THE Angel ended, and in Adam's ear  
So charming left his voice that he awhile  
Thought him still speaking, still stood fixed to  
hear;

Then, as new waked, thus gratefully replied:

"What thanks sufficient, or what recompense  
Equal, have I to render thee? divine  
Historian, who thus largely hast allayed  
The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsafed  
This friendly condescension to relate  
Things else by me unsearchable, now heard      10  
With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,

With glory attributed to the high  
Creator. Something yet of doubt remains,  
Which only the solution can resolve.—  
When I behold this goodly frame, this World  
Of heaven and earth consisting, and compute  
Their magnitudes; this earth, a spot, a grain,  
An atom, with the firmament compared  
And all her numbered stars, that seem to roll  
Spaces incomprehensible—for such                   20  
Their distance argues, and their swift return  
Diurnal—merely to officiate light  
Round this opacous earth, this punctual spot,  
One day and night, in all their vast survey  
Useless besides—reasoning I oft admire  
How Nature, wise and frugal, could commit  
Such disproportions, with superfluous hand  
So many nobier bodies to create,  
Greater so manifold, to this one use,  
For aught appears, and on their orbs impose   30  
Such restless revolution, day by day  
Repeated, while the sedentary earth,  
That better might with far less compass move,  
Served by more noble than herself, attains  
Her end without least motion, and receives,  
As tribute, such a sunless journey brought  
Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light;  
Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails.”  
So spake our sire, and by his countenance seemed

Entering on studious thoughts abstruse; which  
Eve

Perceiving, where she sat retired in sight, 41  
With lowness majestic from her seat,  
And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,  
Rose, and went forth among her fruits and  
flowers,

To visit how they prospered, bud and bloom,  
Her nursery; they at her coming sprung,  
And, touched by her fair tendance, gladiier grew.  
Yet went she not, as not with such discourse  
Delighted, or not capable her ear  
Of what was high. Such pleasure she reserved, 50  
Adam relating, she sole auditress;  
Her husband the relator she preferred  
Before the Angel, and of him to ask  
Chose rather; he, she knew, would intermix  
Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute  
With conjugal caresses; from his lip  
Not words alone pleased her. Oh, when meet  
now

Such pairs, in love and mutual honor joined!  
With goddess-like demeanor forth she went,  
Not unattended, for on her as queen 60  
A pomp of winning Graces waited still,  
And from about her shot darts of desire  
Into all eyes, to wish her still in sight.  
And Raphael now, to Adam's doubt proposed,

Benevolent and facile thus replied:

"To ask or search I blame thee not, for heaven  
Is as the book of God before thee set,  
Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn  
His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years—  
This to attain, whether heaven move or earth, 70  
Imports not, if thou reckon right—the rest  
From Man or Angel the great Architect  
Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge  
His secrets, to be scanned by them who ought  
Rather admire; or, if they list to try  
Conjecture, he his fabric of the heavens  
Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move  
His laughter at their quaint opinions wide  
Hereafter; when they come to model heaven  
And calculate the stars, how they will wield 80  
The mighty frame, how build, unbuild, contrive,  
To save appearances, how gird the sphere  
With centric and eccentric scribbled o'er,  
Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb.  
Already by thy reasoning this I guess,  
Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposes  
That bodies bright and greater should not serve  
The less not bright, nor heaven such journeys  
run,  
Earth sitting still, when she alone receives  
The benefit. Consider first, that great . . . 90  
Or bright infers not excellence: the earth,

Though, in comparison of heaven, so small,  
Nor glistening, may of solid good contain  
More plenty than the sun that barren shines,  
Whose virtue on itself works no effect,  
But in the fruitful earth; there first received,  
His beams, unactive else, their vigor find.  
Yet not to earth are those bright luminaries  
Officious, but to thee, earth's habitant.  
And for the heaven's wide circuit, let it speak      100  
The Maker's high magnificence, who built  
So spacious, and his line stretched out so far,  
That Man may know he dwells not in his own;  
An edifice too large for him to fill,  
Lodged in a small partition, and the rest  
Ordained for uses to his Lord best known.  
The swiftness of those circles attribute,  
Though numberless, to his omnipotence,  
That to corporeal substances could add      109  
Speed almost spiritual. Me thou thinkest not  
slow,  
Who since the morning-hour set out from Heaven  
Where God resides, and ere mid-day arrived  
In Eden, distance inexpressible  
By numbers that have name. But this I urge,  
Admitting motion in the heavens, to shew  
Invalid that which thee to doubt it moved;  
Not that I so affirm, though so it seem  
To thee who hast thy dwelling here on earth.

God, to remove his ways from human sense,  
Placed heaven from earth so far, that earthly sight,  
If it presumes, might err in things too high, 121  
And no advantage gain. What if the sun  
Be centre to the World, and other stars,  
By his attractive virtue and their own  
Incited, dance about him various rounds!  
Their wandering course, now high, now low, then  
hid,

Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,  
In six thou seest; and what if seven to these  
The planet-earth, so steadfast though she seem,  
Insensibly three different motions move! 130  
Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe  
Moved contrary with thwart obliquities;  
Or save the sun his labor, and that swift  
Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb supposed,  
Invisible else above all stars, the wheel  
Of day and night; which needs not thy belief,  
If earth, industrious of herself, fetch day  
Traveling east, and with her part averse  
From the sun's beam meet night, her other part  
Still luminous by his ray. What if that light 140  
Sent from her, through the wide transpicuous air,  
To the terrestrial moon, be as a star  
Eulogizing her by day, as she by night  
This earth! reciprocal, if land be there.  
Fields and inhabitants. Her spots thou seest

As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce  
Fruits in her softened soil, for some to eat  
Alloted there; and other suns perhaps,  
With their attendant moons, thou wilt descry  
Communicating male and female light      150  
—Which two great sexes animate the World—  
Stored in each orb perhaps with some that live.  
For such vast room in nature unpossessed  
By living soul, desert and desolate,  
Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute  
Each orb a glimpse of light, conveyed so far  
Down to this habitable, which returns  
Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.—  
But whether thus these things or whether not,  
Whether the sun, predominant in heaven,      164  
Rise on the earth, or earth rise on the sun,  
He from the east his flaming road begin,  
Or she from west her silent course advance,  
With inoffensive pace, that spinning sleeps  
On her soft axle, while she paces even,  
And bears thee soft with the smooth air along,  
Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid;  
Leave them to God above; him serve and fear  
Of other creatures, as him pleases best,  
Wherever placed, let him dispose; joy thou      170  
In what he gives to thee, this Paradise  
And thy fair Eve; heaven is for thee too high  
To know what passes there. Be lowly wise;

Think only what concerns thee and thy being;  
Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there  
Live, in what state, condition, or degree,  
Contented that thus far hath been revealed  
Not of Earth only, but of highest Heaven."

To whom thus Adam, cleared of doubt, replied:  
"How fully hast thou satisfied me, pure      180

Intelligence of Heaven, Angel serene:  
And, freed from intricacies, thought to live  
The easiest way, nor with perplexing thoughts  
To interrupt the sweet of life, from which  
God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,  
And not molest us, unless we ourselves  
Seek them with wandering thoughts, and notions  
vain.

But apt the mind or fancy is to rove  
Unchecked; and of her roving is no end,  
Till warned, or by experience taught, she  
learn      190

That not to know at large of things remote  
From use, obscure and subtle, but to know  
That which before us lies in daily life  
Is the prime wisdom; what is more, is fume,  
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,  
And renders us in things that most concern  
Unpractised, unprepared, and still to seek.  
Therefore from this high pitch let us descend  
A lower flight, and speak of things at hand,

Useful, whence haply mention may arise      200  
Of something not unseasonable to ask,  
By sufferance, and thy wonted favor, deigned.—  
Thee I have heard relating what was done  
Ere my remembrance; now hear me relate  
My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard.  
And day is not yet spent; till then thou seest  
How subtly to detain thee I devise,  
Inviting thee to hear while I relate,—  
Fond! were it not in hope of thy reply.  
For while I sit with thee I seem in Heaven,      210  
And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear  
Than fruits of palm-tree, pleasantest to thirst  
And hunger both, from labor, at the hour  
Of sweet repast. They satiate and soon fill,  
Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine  
Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety.”

To whom thus Raphael answered, heavenly  
mreek :

“Nor are thy lips ungraceful, sire of men,  
Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee  
Abundantly his gifts hath also poured,      220  
Inward and outward both his image fair :  
Speaking or mute all comeliness and grace  
Attends thee, and each word, each motion forms  
Nor less think we in Heaven of thee on Earth  
Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire  
Gladly into the ways of God with Man;

For God, we see, hath honored thee, and set  
On Man his equal love. Say therefore on;  
For I that day was absent, as befell,  
Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure,      230  
Far on excursion toward the gates of Hell;  
Squared in full legion—such command we had—  
To see that none thence issued forth a spy  
Or enemy, while God was in his work;  
Lest he, incensed at such eruption bold,  
Destruction with creation might have mixed:  
Not that they durst without his leave attempt;  
But us he sends upon his high behests  
For state, as sovran King, and to endure  
Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast  
shut,      240

The dismal gates, and barricadoed strong;  
But, long ere our approaching, heard within  
Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,  
Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.  
Glad we returned up to the coasts of light,  
Ere Sabbath-evening; so we had in charge.  
But thy relations now; for I attend,  
Pleased with thy words no less than thou with  
mine."

So spake the godlike Power, and thus our Sire:  
"For Man to tell how human life began      250  
Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?  
Desire with the still longer to converse

Induced me.—As new waked from soundest sleep,  
Soft on the flowery herb I found me laid,  
In balmy sweat, which with his beams the sun  
Soon dried, and on the reeking moisture fed.  
Straight toward heaven my wondering eyes I  
    turned,

And gazed awhile the ample sky, till, raised  
By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung,  
As thitherward endeavoring, and upright     260  
Stood on my feet. About me round I saw  
Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,  
And liquid lapse of murmuring streams ; by these,  
Creatures that lived and moved, and walked or  
    flew,

Birds on the branches warbling ; all things smiled ;  
With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflowed.  
Myself I then perused, and limb by limb  
Surveyed, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran  
With supple joints, as lively vigor led ;  
But who I was, or where, or from what cause,     270  
Knew not. To speāk I tried, and forthwith spake ;  
My tongue obeyed, and readily could name  
Whate'er I saw. ‘Thou sun,’ said I, ‘fair light,  
And thou enlightened earth, so fresh and gay,  
Ye hills and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains,  
And ye that live and move, fair creatures, tell,  
Tell, if ye saw, how I came thus, how here.  
Not of myself ; by some great Maker then,

In goodness and in power pre-eminent.  
Tell me how may I know him, how adore,      280  
From whom I have that thus I move and live,  
And feel that I am happier than I know.

"While thus I called, and strayed I knew not  
whither,  
From where I first drew air, and first beheld  
This happy light, when answer none returned,  
On a green shady bank, profuse of flowers,  
Pensive I sat me down ; there gentle sleep  
First found me, and with soft oppression seized  
My drowsied sense, untroubled though I thought  
I then was passing to my former state      290  
Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve :  
When suddenly stood at my head a dream,  
Whose inward apparition gently moved  
My fancy to believe I yet had being,  
And lived. One came, methought, of shape divine,  
And said :—'Thy mansion wants thee, Adam ; rise,  
First Man, of men innumerable ordained  
First Father ! called by thee, I come thy guide  
To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepared.'—  
So saying, by the hand he took me, raised,      300  
And over fields and waters, as in air,  
Smooth sliding without step, last led me up  
A woody mountain, whose high top was plain,  
A circuit wide, enclosed, with goodliest trees  
Planted, with walks and bowers, that what I saw

Of earth before scarce pleasant seemed. Each tree  
Loaden with fairest fruit that, hung to the eye  
Tempting, stirred in me sudden appetite  
To pluck and eat ; whereat I waked, and found  
Before mine eyes all real, as the dream      310  
Had lively shadowed. Here had new begun  
My wandering, had not He, who was my guide  
Up hither, from among the trees appeared  
Presence divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,  
In adoration at his feet I fell  
Submiss; he reared me, and, 'Whom thou sought-  
est I am,'

Said mildly, 'Author of all this thou seest  
Above, or round about thee, or beneath.  
This Paradise I give thee, count it thine  
To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat.      320  
Of every tree that in the garden grows  
Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth.  
But of the tree whose operation brings  
Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set,  
The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith,  
Amid the garden by the Tree of Life  
—Remember what I warn thee—shun to taste,  
And shun the bitter consequence; for know,  
The day thou eatest thereof, my sole command  
Transgressed, inevitably thou shalt die,      330  
From that day mortal, and this happy state  
Shalt lose, expelled from hence into a world

Of woe and sorrow.' Sternly he pronounced  
The rigid interdiction, which resounds  
Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice  
Not to incur; but soon his clear aspect  
Returned, and gracious purpose thus renewed:  
'Not only these fair bounds, but all the Earth  
To Thee and to thy race I give; as lords  
Possess it, and all things that therein live,      340  
Or live in sea or air, beast, fish, and fowl.  
In sign whereof, each bird and beast, behold!  
After their kinds, I bring them to receive  
From thee their names, and pay thee fealty  
With low subjection. Understand the same  
Of fish within their watery residence,  
Not hither summoned, since they cannot change  
Their element to draw the thinner air.'—  
As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold  
Approaching two and two; these cowering  
low      350  
With blandishment, each bird stooped on his  
wing.

350

I named them, as they passed, and understood  
Their nature, with such knowledge God endued  
My sudden apprehension. But in these  
I found not what, methought, I wanted still;  
And to the heavenly Vision thus presumed:  
    “Oh, by what name, for thou above all these,  
Above mankind, or aught than mankind higher,

Surpassest far my naming, how may I  
Adore thee, Author of this Universe,                   360  
And all this good to Man? for whose well-being  
So amply, and with hand so liberal,  
Thou hast provided all things. But with me  
I see not who partakes. In solitude  
What happiness? who can enjoy alone?  
Or, all enjoying, what contentment find?'—  
Thus I presumptuous; and the Vision bright,  
As with a smile more brightened, thus replied:

"'What callest thou solitude? Is not the earth  
With various living creatures, and the air           370  
Replenished, and all these at thy command  
To come and play before thee? Knowest thou not  
Their language and their ways? They also know,  
And reason not contemptibly; with these  
Find pastime, and bear rule; thy realm is large.'—  
So spake the universal Lord, and seemed  
So ordering. I, with leave of speech implored,  
And humble deprecation, thus replied:

"'Let not my words offend thee, heavenly  
Power,  
My Maker, be propitious while I speak.           380  
Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,  
And these inferior far beneath me set?  
Among unequals what society  
Can sort, what harmony or true delight?  
Which must be mutual, in proportion due

Given and received; but in disparity,  
The one intense, the other still remiss,  
Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove  
Tedious alike. Of fellowship I speak  
Such as I seek, fit to participate      390  
All rational delight, wherein the brute  
Cannot be human consort. They rejoice  
Each with their kind, lion with lioness;  
So fitly them in pair thou hast combined.  
Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl  
So well converse, nor with the ox the ape;  
Worse then can man with beast, and least of all.'

"Whereto the Almighty answered, not displeased:

'A nice and subtle happiness, I see,  
Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice      400  
Of thy associates, Adam, and wilt taste  
No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.  
What thinkest thou then of me, and this my state?  
Seem I to thee sufficiently possessed  
Of happiness, or not? who am alone  
From all eternity; for none I know  
Second to me or like, equal much less,  
How have I then with whom to hold converse?  
Save with the creatures which I made, and those  
To me inferior, infinite descents      410  
Beneath what other creatures are to thee.'

"He ceased; I lowly answered:—'To attain

The highth and depth of thy eternal ways  
All human thoughts come short, Supreme of  
things!

Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee  
Is no deficiency found; not so is Man,  
But in degree, the cause of his desire  
By conversation with his like to help  
Or solace his defects. No need that thou  
Shouldst propagate, already infinite, 420  
And through all numbers absolute, though one.  
But Man by number is to manifest  
His single imperfection, and beget  
Like of his like, his image multiplied,  
In unity defective, which requires  
Collateral love, and dearest amity.  
Thou in thy secrecy although alone,  
Best with thyself accompanied, seekest not  
Social communication, yet, so pleased,  
Canst raise thy creature to what highth thou wilt  
Of union or communion, deified; 431  
I, by conversing, cannot these erect  
From prone, nor in their ways complacence  
find.'—

Thus I emboldened spake, and freedom used  
Permissive, and acceptance found, which gained  
This answer from the gracious Voice divine:

"Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleased,  
And find thee knowing not of beasts alone,

Which thou hast rightly named, but of thyself,  
Expressing well the spirit within thee free, 44<sup>a</sup>  
My image, not imparted to the brute,  
Whose fellowship therefore, unmeet for thee,  
Good reason was thou freely shouldest dislike;  
And be so minded still. I, ere thou spakest,  
Knew it not good for Man to be alone,  
And no such company as then thou sawest  
Intended thee, for trial only brought,  
To see how thou couldest judge of fit and meet.  
What next I bring shall please thee, be assured,  
Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self, 45<sup>a</sup>  
Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire.'

'He ended, or I heard no more; for now  
My earthly by his heavenly overpowered,  
Which it had long stood under, strained to the  
highth

In that celestial colloquy sublime,  
As with an object that excels the sense,  
Dazzled and spent sunk down, and sought repair  
Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, called  
By Nature as in aid, and closed mine eyes.  
Mine eyes he closed, but open left the cell 46<sup>a</sup>  
Of fancy, my internal sight, by which,  
Abstract as in a trance, methought I saw,  
Though sleeping, where I lay and saw the Shape  
Still glorious before whom awake I stood;  
Who swooping opened my left side, and took

E

T AND  
MY

From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,  
And life-blood streaming fresh; wide was the  
wound,  
But suddenly with flesh filled up and healed.  
The rib he formed and fashioned with his hands:  
Under his forming hands a creature grew, 470  
Manlike, but different sex, so lovely fair,  
That what seemed fair in all the world seemed now  
Mean, or in her summed up, in her contained,  
And in her looks, which from that time infused  
Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,  
And into all things from her air inspired  
The spirit of love and amorous delight.  
She disappeared, and left me dark; I waked  
To find her, or forever to deplore  
Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure: 480  
When, out of hope, behold her not far off,  
Such as I saw her in my dream, adorned  
With what all Earth or Heaven could bestow,  
To make her amiable. On she came,  
Led by her heavenly Maker, though unseen  
And guided by his voice; nor uninformed  
Of nuptial sanctity and marriage rights.  
Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,  
In every gesture dignity and love.  
I overjoyed could not forbear aloud:

“ ‘This turn hath made amends; thou hast  
fulfilled

Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,  
Giver of all things fair! but fairest this  
Of all thy gifts, nor enviest. I now see  
Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself  
Before me; Woman's her name, of Man  
Extracted; for this cause he shall forgo  
Father and mother, and to his wife adhere;  
And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.

'She heard me thus; and, though divinely  
brought,

508

E

T AND  
MY

Yet innocence and virgin modesty,  
Her virtue and the conscience of her worth,  
That would be wooed, and not unsought be won,  
Not obvious, not obtrusive, but retired,  
The more desirable; or, to say all,  
Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,  
Wrought in her so, that seeing me she turned;  
I followed her, she what was honor knew,  
And with obsequious majesty approved  
My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower 510  
I led her blushing like the Morn: all heaven,  
And happy constellations, on that hour  
Shed their selectest influence; the earth  
Gave signs of gratulation, and each hill;  
Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs  
Whispered it to the woods, and from their wings  
Flung rose, flung odors from the spicy shrub,  
Disporting, till the amorous bird of night

Sung spousal, and bid haste the Evening-star  
On his hill-top, to light the bridal lamp. 520

"Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought  
My story to the sum of earthly bliss  
Which I enjoy; and must confess to find  
In all things else delight indeed, but such  
As, used or not, works in the mind no change,  
Nor vehement desire; these delicacies  
I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and  
flowers,

Walks, and the melody of birds: but here,  
Far otherwise, transported I behold,  
Transported touch; here passion first I felt, 530  
Commotion strange, in all enjoyments else  
Superior and unmoved, here only weak  
Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance.  
Or Nature failed in me, and left some part  
Not proof enough such object to sustain,  
Or, from my side subducting, took perhaps  
More than enough; at least on her bestowed  
Too much of ornament, in outward shew  
Elaborate, of inward less exact.

For well I understand, in the prime end 540  
Of Nature, her the inferior, in the mind  
And inward faculties, which most excel;  
In outward also her resembling less  
His image who made both, and less expressing  
The character of that dominion given

O'er other creatures; yet when I approach  
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems  
And in herself complete, so well to know  
Her own, that what she wills to do or say,  
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best. 550  
All higher Knowledge in her presence falls,  
Degraded; Wisdom in discourse with her  
Loses discountenanced, and like Folly shews;  
Authority and Reason on her wait,  
As one intended first, not after made  
Occasionally; and, to consummate all,  
Greatness of mind and Nobleness their seat  
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe  
About her, as a guard angelic placed."

To whom the Angel with contracted brow: 560  
"Accuse not Nature, she hath done her part;  
Do thou but thine, and be not diffident  
Of Wisdom; she deserts thee not, if thou  
Dismiss not her, when most thou needest her nigh,  
By attributing overmuch to things  
Less excellent, as thou thyself perceivest.  
For what admires thou? what transports thee so?  
An outside; fair, no doubt, and worthy well  
Thy cherishing, thy honoring, and thy love,  
Not thy subjection. Weigh with her thyself; 570  
Then value. Oft-times nothing profits more  
Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right,  
Well managed; of that skill the more thou knowest,

The more she will acknowledge thee her head,  
And to realities yield all her shews;  
Made so adorn for thy delight the more,  
So awful, that with honor thou mayest love  
Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.  
But if the sense of touch, whereby mankind  
Is propagated, seem such dear delight 580  
Beyond all other, think the same vouchsafed  
To cattle and each beast; which would not be  
To them made common and divulged, if aught  
Therein enjoyed were worthy to subdue  
The soul of Man, or passion in him move.  
What higher in her society thou findest,  
Attractive, human, rational, love still;  
In loving thou dost well; in passion not,  
Wherein true love consists not; love refines  
The thought, and heart enlarges, hath his seat 59c  
In reason, and is judicious, is the scale  
By which to heavenly love thou mayst ascend,  
Not sunk in carnal pleasure; for which cause  
Among the beasts no mate for thee was found."

To whom thus, half abashed, Adam replied:  
"Neither her outside formed so fair, nor aught  
In procreation, common to all kinds—  
Though higher of the genial bed by far,  
And with mysterious reverence I deem—  
So much delights me, as those graceful acts, 600  
Those thousand decencies, that daily flow

From all her words and actions, mixed with love  
And sweet compliance, which declare unfeigned  
Union of mind, or in us both one soul ;  
Harmony to behold in wedded pair  
More grateful than harmonious sound to the ear.  
Yet these subject not ; I to thee disclose  
What inward thence I feel, not therefore foiled,  
Who meet with various objects, from the sense  
Variously representing, yet still free      610  
Approve the best, and follow what I approve.  
To love thou blamest me not, for love thou sayest  
Leads up to Heaven, is both the way and guide.  
Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask.—  
Love not the heavenly Spirits? and how their love  
Express they ? by looks only, or do they mix  
Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch ?”

To whom the Angel, with a smile that glowed  
Celestial rosy-red, love’s proper hue,  
Answered :—“Let it suffice thee that thou knowest  
Us happy, and without love no happiness.      621  
Whatever pure thou in the body enjoyest—  
And pure thou wert created—we enjoy  
In eminence, and obstacle find none  
Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclusive bars :  
Easier than air with air, if Spirits embrace,  
Total they mix, union of pure with pure  
Desiring, nor restrained conveyance need  
As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.—

But I can now no more ; the parting sun      630  
Beyond the earth's Green Cape and Verdant Isles  
Hesperean sets, my signal to depart.  
Be strong, live happy, and love ! but first of all  
Him whom to love is to obey, and keep  
His great command ; take heed lest passion sway  
Thy judgment to do aught, which else free-will  
Would not admit ; thine, and of all thy sons  
The weal or woe in thee is placed ; beware !  
I in thy persevering shall rejoice,  
And all the Blest. Stand fast; to stand or fall 640  
Free in thine own arbitrement it lies.  
Perfect within, no outward aid require ;  
And all temptations to transgress repel."

So saying, he arose ; whom Adam thus  
Followed with benediction :—“Since to part,  
Go, heavenly guest, ethereal messenger,  
Sent from whose sovran goodness I adore.  
Gentle to me and affable hath been  
Thy condescension, and shall be honored ever  
With grateful memory; thou to mankind      650  
Be good and friendly still, and oft return.”

So parted they, the Angel up to Heaven  
From the thick shade, and Adam to his bower

# PARADISE LOST.

## BOOK IX.

### THE ARGUMENT.

SATAN having compassed the earth, with meditated guile returns as a midst by night into Paradise, enters into the Serpent sleeping. Adam and Eve in the morning go forth to their labors, which Eve proposes to divide in several places, each laboring apart; Adam consents not, alleging the danger, lest that enemy, of whom they were forewarned, should attempt her found alone. Eve, loth to be thought not circumspect or firm enough, urges her going apart, the rather desirous to make trial of her strength; Adam at last yields. The Serpent finds her alone; his subtle approach, first gazing, then speaking, with much flattery extolling Eve above all other creatures. Eve, wondering to hear the Serpent speak, asks how he attained to human speech and such understanding not till now: the Serpent answers, that by tasting of a certain tree in the garden he attained both to speech and reason, till then void of both. Eve requires him to bring her to that tree, and finds it to be the Tree of Knowledge forbidden. The Serpent now grown bolder, with many wiles and arguments induces her at length to eat; she, pleased with the taste, deliberates a while whether to impart thereof to Adam or not, at last brings him of the fruit, relates what persuaded her to eat thereof. Adam at first amazed, but perceiving her lost, resolves through vehemence of love to perish with her; and extenuating the trespass eats also of the fruit. The effects thereof in them both; they seek to cover their nakedness; then fall to variance and accusation of one another.

E

T AND  
MY

No more of talk where God or Angel guest  
With Man, as with his friend, familiar used  
To sit indulgent, and with him partake  
Rural repast, permitting him the while  
Venial discourse unblamed. I now must change  
Those notes to tragic; foul distrust, and breach  
Disloyal on the part of Man, revolt  
And disobedience; on the part of Heaven,  
Now alienated, distance and distaste,  
Anger and just rebuke, and judgement given, 10  
That brought into this world a world of woe,  
Sin and her shadow Death, and Misery,  
Death's harbinger: sad task! yet argument  
Not less but more heroic than the wrath  
Of stern Achilles, on his foe pursued  
Thrice fugitive about Troy-wall; or rage  
Of Turnus for Lavinia disespoused;  
Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long  
Perplexed the Greek, and Cytherea's son;—  
If answerable style I can obtain  
Of my celestial patroness, who deigns  
Her nightly visitation, unimplored,  
And dictates to me slumbering, or inspires  
Easy my unpremeditated verse,  
Since first this subject for heroic song  
Pleased me, long choosing and beginning late,  
Not sedulous by nature to indite  
Wars, hitherto the only argument 20

Heroic deemed, chief mastery to dissect,  
With long and tedious havoc, fabled knights, 30  
In battles feigned—the better fortitude  
Of patience and heroic martyrdom  
Unsung—or to describe races and games,  
Or tilting furniture, emblazoned shields,  
Impresses quaint, caparisons and steeds,  
Bases and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights  
At joust and tourney; then marshalled feast  
Served up in hall with sewers and seneschals;  
The skill of artifice or office mean,  
Not that which justly gives heroic name  
To person or to poem. Me, of these  
Nor skilled nor studious, higher argument  
Remains, sufficient of itself to raise  
That name, unless an age too late, or cold  
Climate, or years, damp my intended wing,  
Depressed; and much they may if all be mine,  
Not hers who brings it nightly to my ear.

The sun was sunk, and after him the star  
Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring  
Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter 50  
'Twixt day and night; and now from end to end  
Night's hemisphere had veiled the horizon round,  
When Satan, who late fled, before the threats  
Of Gabriel, out of Eden, now improved  
In meditated fraud and malice, bent  
On Man's destruction, maugre what might hap

E

T AND  
MY

Of heavier on himself, fearless returned.—  
By night he fled, and at midnight returned,  
From compassing the earth; cautious of day,  
Since Uriel, regent of the sun, descried      60  
His entrance, and forewarned the Cherubim  
That kept their watch. Thence, full of anguish,  
driven

The space of seven continued nights he rode  
With darkness; thrice the equinoctial line  
He circled, four times crossed the car of Night  
From pole to pole, traversing each colure;  
On the eighth return, and, on the coast averse  
From entrance or cherubic watch, by stealth  
Found unsuspected way. There was a place  
—Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought  
the change—      70

Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradise,  
Into a gulf shot underground, till part  
Rose up a fountain by the Tree of Life.  
In with the river sunk, and with it rose  
Satan, involved in rising mist; then sought  
Where to lie hid. Sea he had searched and land,  
From Eden over Pontus, and the pool  
Mæotis, up beyond the river Ob;  
Downward as far antarctic; and in length  
West from Orontes to the ocean barred      80  
At Dariën, thence to the land where flows  
Ganges and Indus. Thus the orb he roamed

With narrow search, and, with inspection deep,  
Considered every creature, which of all  
Most opportune might serve his wiles, and found  
The serpent subtlest beast of all the field.

Him, after long debate, irresolute  
Of thoughts revolved, his final sentence chose,  
Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom  
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide      90  
From sharpest sight; for in the wily snake  
Whatever sleights none would suspicious mark,  
As from his wit and native subtlety  
Proceeding, which, in other beasts observed,  
Doubt might beget of diabolic power,  
Active within beyond the sense of brute.  
Thus he resolved, but first from inward grief  
His bursting passion into plaints thus poured:

"O Earth, how like to Heaven, if not preferred  
More justly, seat worthier of Gods, as built 100  
With second thoughts, reforming what was old!  
For what God, after better, worse would build?  
Terrestrial Heaven, danced round by other  
heavens,

That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,  
Light above light, for thee alone, as seems,  
In thee concentrating all their precious beams  
Of sacred influence! As God in Heaven  
Is centre, yet extends to all, so thou  
Centring receivest from all those orbs; in thee,

E

T AND  
MY

Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears,  
Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth 111  
Of creatures animate with gradual life

Of growth, sense, reason, all summed up in Man.  
With what delight could I have walked thee  
round,

If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange  
Of hill and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,  
Now land, now sea, and shores with forest  
crowned,

Rocks, dens, and caves! but I in none of these  
Find place or refuge; and the more I see  
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel 120  
Torment within me, as from the hateful siege  
Of contraries; all good to me becomes  
Bane, and in Heaven much worse would be my  
state.

But neither here seek I, no, nor in Heaven,  
To dwell, unless by mastering Heaven's Supreme;  
Nor hope to be myself less miserable  
By what I seek, but others to make such  
As I, though thereby worse to me redound:  
For only in destroying I find ease  
To my relentless thoughts; and, him  
destroyed, 130

Or won to what may work his utter loss,  
For whom all this was made, all this will soon  
Follow, as to him linked in weal or woe;

In woe then; that destruction wide may range.  
To me shall be the glory sole among  
The infernal Powers, in one day to have marred  
What he, Almighty styled, six nights and days  
Continued making, and who knows how long  
Before had been contriving? though perhaps  
Not longer than since I in one night freed 140  
From servitude inglorious well nigh half  
The angelic name, and thinner left the throng  
Of his adorers. He, to be avenged,  
And to repair his numbers thus impaired,  
Whether such virtue, spent of old, now failed  
More Angels to create—if they at least  
Are his created—or to spoils us more,  
Determined to advance into our room  
A creature formed of earth, and him endow,  
Exalted from so base original, 150  
With heavenly spoils, our spoils. What he decreed  
He effected; Man he made, and for him built  
Magnificent this World, and Earth his seat;  
Him lord pronounced, and, O indignity!  
Subjected to his service Angel-wings,  
And flaming ministers, to watch and tend  
Their earthly charge. Of these the vigilance  
I dread, and to elude, thus wrapt in mist  
Of midnight-vapor, glide obscure, and pry  
In every bush and brake, where hap may find 160  
The serpent sleeping, in whose mazy folds

T AND  
MY

To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.—  
O foul descent! that I, who erst contended  
With Gods to sit the highest, am now constrained  
Into a beast, and, mixed with bestial slime,  
This essence to incarnate and imbrute,  
That to the highth of Deity aspired.  
But what will not ambition and revenge  
Descend to? Who aspires must down as low  
As high he soared, obnoxious first or last      170  
To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,  
Bitter ere long back on itself recoils.—  
Let it; I reck not, so it light well amid,  
Since higher I fall short, on him who next  
Provokes my envy, this new favorite  
Of Heaven, this man of clay, son of despite,  
Whom, us the more to spite, his Maker raised  
From dust. Spite then with spite is best repaid."

So saying, through each thicket, dank or dry,  
Like a black mist low-creeping, he held on      180  
His midnight search, where soonest he might find  
The serpent. Him fast sleeping soon he found,  
In labyrinth of many a round self-rolled,  
His head the midst, well stored with subtle wiles;  
Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den,  
Nor nocent yet; but on the grassy herb,  
Fearless unfear'd, he slept. In at his mouth  
The Devil entered, and his brutal sense,  
In heart or head, possessing soon inspired

With act intelligential; but his sleep 190  
Disturbed not, waiting close the approach of morn.

Now, when as sacred light began to dawn,  
In Eden, on the humid flowers, that breathed  
Their morning incense, when all things that  
breathe,

From the Earth's great altar, send up silent praise  
To the Creator, and his nostrils fill  
With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,  
And joined their vocal worship to the quire  
Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake  
The season, prime for sweetest vents and airs. 200  
Then commune, how that day they best may ply  
Their growing work; for much their work out-  
grew

The hands' dispatch of two, gardening so wide,  
And Eve first to her husband thus began:

"Adam, well may we labor still to dress  
This garden, still to tend plant, herb, and flower,  
Our pleasant task enjoined; but, till more hands  
Aid us, the work under our labor grows,  
Luxurious by restraint; what we by day  
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind, 210  
One night or two with wanton growth derides,  
Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise,  
Or hear what to my mind first thoughts present.—  
Let us divide our labors; thou, where choice  
Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind

T AND  
MY

The woodbine round this arbor, or direct  
The clasping ivy where to climb; while I,  
In yonder spring of roses, intermixed  
With myrtle, find what to redress till noon;  
For, while so near each other thus all day      220  
Our task we choose, what wonder if so near  
Looks intervene and smiles, or object new  
Casual discourse draw on! which intermits  
Our day's work, brought to little, though begun  
Early, and the hour of supper comes unearned."

To whom mild answer Adam thus returned:  
"Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond  
Compare above all living creatures dear!  
Well hast thou motioned, well thy thoughts  
employed,  
How we might best fulfill the work which  
here      230

God hath assigned us, nor of me shalt pass  
Unpraised; for nothing lovelier can be found  
In woman, than to study household good,  
And good works in her husband to promote.  
Yet not so strictly hath our Lord imposed  
Labor, as to debar us when we need  
Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,  
Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse  
Of looks and smiles; for smiles from reason flow,  
To brute denied, and are of love the food,      240  
Love not the lowest end of human life;

For not to irksome toil, but to delight,  
He made us, and delight to reason joined.  
These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint  
hands

Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide  
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long  
Assist us. But, if much converse perhaps  
Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield;  
For solitude sometimes is best society,  
And short retirement urges sweet return. 250

But other doubt possesses me, lest harm  
Befall thee severed from me; for thou knowest  
What hath been warned us, what malicious foe  
Envying our happiness, and of his own  
Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame  
By sly assault; and somewhere near at hand  
Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find,  
His wish and best advantage, us asunder;

Hopeless to circumvent us joined, where each  
To other speedy aid might lend at need. 260

Whether his first design be to withdraw  
Our fealty from God, or to disturb  
Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss  
Enjoyed by us excites his envy more;—  
Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side  
That gave thee being, still shades thee and  
protects.

The wife, where danger or dishonor lurks.

E

T AND  
MY

Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,  
Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.”

To whom the virgin-majesty of Eve, 270  
As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,  
With sweet austere composure thus replied :

“Offspring of Heaven and Earth, and all  
Earth’s lord !

That such an enemy we have, who seeks  
Our ruin, both by thee informed I learn,  
And from the parting Angel overheard,  
As in a shady nook I stood behind,  
Just then returned at shut of evening flowers.  
But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt  
To God or thee, because we have a foe 280  
May tempt it, I expected not to hear.  
His violence thou fearest not, being such  
As we, not capable of death or pain,  
Can either not receive, or can repel.  
His fraud is then thy fear, which plain infers  
Thy equal fear that my firm faith and love  
Can by his fraud be shaken or seduced ;  
Thoughts, which how found they harbor in thy  
breast ?

Adam ! misthought of her to thee so dear !”

To whom with healing words Adam replied: 290  
“Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve !  
—For such thou art, from sin and blame entire—  
Not diffident of thee do I dissuade

Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid  
The attempt itself, intended by our foe.  
For he who tempts, though in vain, at least  
asperses

The tempted with dishonor foul, supposed  
Not incorruptible of faith, not proof  
Against temptation. Thou thyself with scorn  
And anger wouldest resent the offered wrong, 30c  
Though ineffectual found ; misdeem not then,  
If such affront I labor to avert  
From thee alone, which on us both at once  
The Enemy, though bold, will hardly dare,  
Or daring, first on me the assault shall light.  
Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn ;  
Subtle he needs must be, who could seduce  
Angel ; nor think superfluous others' aid.  
I from the influence of thy looks receive  
Access in every virtue, in thy sight 31c  
More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were  
Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,  
Shame to be overcome or overreached,  
Would utmost vigor raise, and raised unite.  
Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel  
Whem I am present, and thy trial choose  
With me, best witness of thy virtue tried?"

So spake domestic Adam in his care  
And matrimonial love ; but Eve, who thought  
Less attributed to her faith sincere, 320

E

T AND  
MY

Thus her reply with accent sweet renewed :

"If this be our condition, thus to dwell  
 In narrow circuit straitened by a foe,  
 Subtle or violent, we not endued  
 Single with like defence, wherever met,  
 How are we happy, still in fear of harm ?  
 But harm precedes not sin. Only our foe  
 Tempting affronts us with his foul esteem  
 Of our integrity : his foul esteem  
 Sticks no dishonor on our front, but turns      330  
 Foul on himself; then wherefore shunned or feared  
 By us ? who rather double honor gain  
 From his surmise proved false, find peace within,  
 Favor from Heaven, our witness, from the event.  
 And what is faith, love, virtue unassayed  
 Alone, without exterior help sustained?  
 Let us not then suspect our happy state  
 Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,  
 As not secure to single or combined.  
 Frail is our happiness, if this be so,      340  
 And Eden were no Eden thus exposed."

To whom thus Adam fervently replied :  
 "O Woman, best are all things as the will  
 Of God ordained them; his creating hand  
 Nothing imperfect or deficient left  
 Of all that he created, much less Man,  
 Or aught that might this happy state secure,  
 Secure from outward force; within himself

The danger lies, yet lies within his power :  
Against his will he can receive no harm.      350  
But God left free the will, for what obeys  
Reason is free; and reason he made right,  
But bid her well beware, and still erect,  
Lest, by some fair-appearing good surprised,  
She dictate false, and misinform the will  
To do what God expressly hath forbid.  
Not then mistrust, but tender love, enjoins  
That I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me.  
Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve,  
Since reason not impossibly may meet      360  
Some specious object by the foe suborned,  
And fall into deception unaware,  
Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warned.  
Seek not temptation then, which to avoid  
Were better, and most likely it from me  
Thou sever not; trial will come unsought.  
Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve  
First thy obedience; the other who can know,  
Not seeing thee attempted? who attest?  
But if thou think trial unsotight may find      370  
Us both securer than thus warned thou seemest,  
Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more.  
Go in thy native innocence, rely  
On what thou hast of virtue, summon all;  
For God toward thee hath done his part; do  
thine."

E

T AND  
MY

So spake the patriarch of mankind, but Eve  
Persisted; yet submiss, though last, replied:

"With thy permission then, and thus forewarned,  
Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words  
Touched only, that our trial, when lest sought, 380  
May find us both perhaps far less prepared,  
The willinger I go, nor much expect  
A foe so proud will first the weaker seek;  
So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse."

Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand  
Soft she withdrew, and, like a wood-nymph light,  
Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's train,  
Betook her to the groves; but Delia's self  
In gait surpassed, and goddess-like deport,  
Though not as she with bow and quiver armed, 390  
But with such gardening-tools as yet art rude,  
Guiltless of fire, had formed, or Angels brought  
To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorned,  
Likkest she seemed—Pomona when she fled  
Vertumnus—or to Ceres in her prime,  
Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.  
Her long with ardent look his eye pursued,  
Delighted, but desiring more her stay.  
Oft he to her his charge of quick return  
Repeated; she to him as oft engaged 400  
To be returned by noon amid the bower,  
And all things in best order to invite  
Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.

O much deceived, much failing, hapless Eve,  
Of thy presumed return! event perverse!  
Thou never from that hour in Paradise  
Foundest either sweet repast, or sound repose;  
Such ambush, hid among sweetflowers and shades,  
Waited, with hellish rancour imminent,  
To intercept thy way, or send thee back      410  
Despoiled of innocence, of faith, of bliss.  
For now, and since first break of dawn, the Fiend,  
Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come;  
And on his quest where likeliest he might find  
The only two of mankind, but in them  
The whole included race, his purposed prey.  
In bower and field he sought, where any tuft  
Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,  
Their tendance or plantation for delight;  
By fountain or by shady rivulet      420  
He sought them both, but wished his hap  
might find

Eve separate; he wished, but not with hope  
Of what so seldom chanced, when to his wis  
Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,  
Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,  
Half-spied, so thick the roses bushing round  
About her glowed, oft stooping to support  
Each flower of slender stalk, whose head, though  
gay  
Carnation, purple, azure, or specked with gold,

E

T AND  
MY

Hung drooping unsustained; them she up-  
stays

430

Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while  
Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,  
From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh  
Nearer he drew, and many a walk traversed  
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm;  
Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen  
Among thick-woven arborets, and flowers  
Imbordered on each bank, the hand of Eve:  
Spot more delicious than those gardens feigned  
Or of revived Adonis, or renowned  
Alcinoüs, host of old Laertes' son,  
Or that, not mystic, where the sapient king  
Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse:  
Much he the place admired, the person more.  
As one, who long in populous city pent,  
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,  
Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe  
Among the pleasant villages and farms  
Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight,  
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine, 450  
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;  
If chance with nymphlike step fair virgin pass,  
What pleasing seemed for her now pleases more,  
She most, and in her look sums all delight;  
Such pleasure took the Serpent to behold  
This flowery plat, the sweet recess of Eve,

Thus early, thus alone. Her heavenly form  
Angelic, but more soft and feminine,  
Her graceful innocence, her every air  
Of gesture or least action overawed      460  
His malice, and with rapine sweet bereaved  
His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought.  
That space the Evil-one abstracted stood  
From his own evil, and for the time remained  
Stupidly good, of enmity disarmed,  
Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge.  
But the hot hell that always in him burns,  
Though in mid-Heaven, soon ended his delight,  
And tortures him now more, the more he sees  
Of pleasure not for him ordained. Then soon 470  
Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts  
Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites:

"Thoughts, whither have ye led me? with what  
sweet

Compulsion thus transported to forget  
What hither brought us? hate, not love, nor hope  
Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste  
Of pleasure, but all pleasure to destroy,  
Save what is in destroying; other joy  
To me is lost. Then let me not let pass  
Occasion which now smiles. Behold alone 480  
The woman, opportune to all attempts,  
Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,  
Whose higher intellectual more I shun,

E

T AND  
MY

And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb  
Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould  
Foe not formidable, exempt from wound,  
I not; so much hath Hell debased, and pain  
Enfeebled me, to what I was in Heaven.  
She fair, divinely fair, fit love for Gods,  
Not terrible, though terror be in love,      49c  
And beauty, not approached by stronger hate,  
Hate stronger under shew of love well feigned,  
The way which to her ruin now I tend."

So spake the Enemy of Mankind, enclosed  
In serpent, inmate bad, and toward Eve  
Addressed his way; not with indented wave,  
Prone on the ground, as since, but on his rear,  
Circular base of rising folds, that towered  
Fold above fold, a surging maze, his head  
Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes,      500  
With burnished neck of verdant gold, erect  
Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass  
Floated redundant. Pleasing was his shape  
And lovely, never since of serpent-kind  
Lovelier; not those that in Illyria changed  
Hermione and Cadmus, or the god  
In Epidaurus; nor to which transfigured  
Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline, was seen,  
He with Olympias, this with her who bore  
Scipio, the lighth of Rome. With tract oblique  
At first, as one who sought access but feared      511

To interrupt, sidelong he works his way.  
As when a ship by skilful steersman wrought,  
Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind  
Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail :  
So varied he, and of his tortuous train  
Curled many a wanton wreath, in sight of Eve  
To lure her eye. She, busied, heard the sound  
Of rustling leaves, but minded not, as used  
To such disport before her through the field, 520  
From every beast, more duteous at her call,  
Than at Circean call the herd disguised.  
He, bolder now, uncalled before her stood,  
But as in gaze admiring: oft he bowed  
His turret-crest and sleek enamelled neck,  
Fawning, and licked the ground whereon she trod.  
His gentle dumb expression turned at length  
The eye of Eve to mark his play; he, glad  
Of her attention gained, with serpent-tongue  
Organic, or impulse of vocal air, 530  
His fraudulent temptation thus began :

"Wonder not, sovran mistress—if perhaps  
Thou canst, who art sole wonder—much less arm  
Thy looks, the heaven of mildness, with disdain,  
Displeased that I approach thee thus, and gaze  
Insatiate, I thus single, nor have feared  
Thy awful brow, more awful thus retired.  
Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair!  
Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine

E

T AND  
MY

By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore,      540  
With ravishment beheld, there best beheld  
Where universally admired    But here,  
In this enclosure wild, these beasts among,  
Beholders rude, and shallow to discern  
Half what in thee is fair, one man except  
Who sees thee?—and what is one?—who shouldst  
be seen

A Goddess among Gods, adored and served  
By Angels numberless, thy daily train.”  
So glazed the Tempter, and his proem tuned:  
Into the heart of Eve his words made way,      550  
Though at the voice much marvelling; at length,  
Not unamazed, she thus in answer spake:

“What may this mean? language of Man pro-  
nounced  
By tongue of brute, and human sense expressed !  
The first at least of these I thought denied  
To beasts, whom God on their creation-day,  
Created mute to all articulate sound;  
The latter I demur, for in their looks  
Much reason, and in their actions, oft appears.  
Thee, Serpent, subtlest beast of all the field      560  
I knew, but not with human voice endued.  
Redouble then this miracle, and say,  
How camest thou speakable of mute, and how  
To me so friendly grown above the rest  
Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight;

Say, for such wonder claims attention due."

To whom the guileful Tempter thus replied:  
"Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve!  
Easy to me it is to tell thee all  
What thou commandest, and right thou shouldst  
be obeyed." . . . . . 570

I was at first, as other beasts that graze  
The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,  
As was my food; nor aught but food discerned  
Or sex, and apprehended nothing high:  
Till on a day, roving the field, I chanced  
A goodly tree far distant to behold,  
Loaden with fruit of fairest colors mixed,  
Ruddy and gold. I nearer drew to gaze;  
When from the boughs a savory odor blown,  
Grateful to appetite, more pleased my sense 580  
Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats  
Of ewe or goat, dropping with milk at even,  
Unstucked of lamb or kid, that tend their play.  
To satisfy the sharp desire I had  
Of tasting those fair apples I resolved  
Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,  
Powerful persuaders, quickened at the sent  
Of that alluring fruit, urged me so keen.  
About the mossy trunk I wound me soon;  
For, high from ground, the branches would require  
Thy utmost reach or Adam's: round the tree 591  
All other beasts that saw, with like desire

E

T AND  
MY

Longing and envying, stood, but could not reach.  
Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung  
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill  
I spared not, for such pleasure till that hour  
At feed or fountain never had I found.  
Sated at length, erè long I might perceive  
Strange alteration in me, to degree  
Of reason in my inward powers, and speech 600  
Wanted not long, though to this shape retained.  
Thenceforth to speculations high or deep  
I turned my thoughts, and with capacious mind  
Considered all things visible in heaven,  
Or earth, or middle, all things fair and good.  
But all that fair and good in thy divine  
Semblance, and in thy beauty's heavenly ray,  
United I beheld; no fair to thine  
Equivalent or second! which compelled  
Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come 610  
And gaze, and worship thee of right declared  
Sovran of creatures, universal Dame!"'

Sq talked the spirited sly Snake, and Eve,  
Yet more amazed, unwary thus replied:  
"Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt  
The virtue of that fruit, in thee first proved.  
But say, where grows the tree? from hence how  
far?"

For many are the trees of God that grow  
In Paradise, and various, yet unknown

To us, in such abundance lies our choice, 620  
As leaves a greater store of fruit untouched,  
Still hanging incorruptible, till men  
Grow up to their provision, and more hands  
Help to disburden Nature of her birth."

To whom the wily Adder, blithe and glad:  
"Empress, the way is ready, and not long;  
Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,  
Fast by a fountain, one small thicket past  
Of blowing myrrh and balm. If thou accept  
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon." 630

"Lead then," said Eve. He leading swiftly  
rolled

In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,  
To mischief swift: hope elevates, and joy  
Brightens his crest. As when a wandering fire,  
Compact of unctuous vapor, which the night  
Condenses, and the cold environs round,  
Kindled through agitation to a flame  
—Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends—  
Hovering and blazing with delusive light, 639  
Misleads the amazed night-wanderer from his  
way,

To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool;  
There swallowed up and lost, from succour far:  
So glistered the dire Snake, and into fraud  
Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the tree  
Of prohibition, root of all our woe;

E

T AND  
MX

Which when she saw, thus to her guide she  
spake:

"Serpent, we might have spared our coming  
hither,

Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess,  
The credit of whose virtue rest with thee;  
Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects. 650  
But of this tree we may not taste nor touch;  
God so commanded, and left that command  
Sole daughter of his voice: the rest, we live  
Law to ourselves; our reason is our law."

To whom the Tempter guilefully replied:  
"Indeed! Hath God then said that of the fruit  
Of all these garden-trees ye shall not eat,  
Yet lords declared of all in earth or air?"

To whom thus Eve, yet sinless:—"Of the fruit  
Of each tree in the garden we may eat; 660  
But of the fruit of this fair tree, amidst  
The garden, God hath said, 'Ye shall not eat  
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.'"

She scarce had said, though brief, when now  
more bold  
The Tempter, but with shew of zeal and love  
To Man, and indignation at his wrong,  
New part puts on; and, as to passion moved,  
Fluctuates disturbed, yet comely, and in act  
Raised, as of some great matter to begin.  
As when of old some orator renowned, 670

In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence  
Flourished, since mute, to some great cause  
addressed,  
Stood in himself collected; while each part,  
Motion, each act, won audience ere the tongue;  
Sometimes in highth began, as no delay  
Of preface brooking, through his zeal of right:  
So standing, moving, cr to highth up-grown,  
The Tempter, all impassioned, thus began:

"O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving plant,  
Mother of science ! now I feel thy power 680  
Within me clear, not only to discern  
Things in their causes, but to trace the ways  
Of highest agents, deemed however wise.  
Queen of this Universe ! do not believe  
Those rigid threats of death. Ye shall not die.  
How should you? by the fruit ? it gives you life  
To knowledge; by the threatener ? look on me,  
Me who have touched and tasted, yet both live,  
And life more perfect have attained than Fate  
Meant me, by venturing higher than my lot. 690  
Shall that be shut to Man, which to the beast  
Is open ? or will God incense his ire  
For such a petty trespass ? and not praise  
Rather your dauntless virtue? whom the pain  
Of death denounced—whatever thing death be  
Deterred not from achieving what might lead  
To happier life, knowledge of good and evil;

E

T AND  
MY

Of good, how just? of evil . . . if what is evil  
Be real, why not known, since easier shunned?  
God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just; 700  
Not just, not God; not feared then, nor obeyed:  
Your fear itself of death removes the fear.

Why then was this forbid? Why, but to awe?

Why, but to keep ye low and ignorant,  
His worshipers? He knows that, in the day  
Ye eat thereof, your eyes, that seem so clear,  
Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then  
Opened and cleared, and ye shall be as Gods,  
Knowing both good and evil, as they know.

That ye shall be as Gods, since I as Man, 710

Internal Man, is but proportion meet;

I, of brute, human; ye, of human, Gods.

So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off  
Human, to put on Gods; death to be wished,  
Though threatened, which no worse than this can  
bring.

And what are Gods, that Man may not become  
As they, participating godlike food?

The Gods are first, and that advantage use  
On our belief, that all from them proceeds.

I question it; for this fair earth I see, 720

Warmed by the sun, producing every kind,

Them nothing. If they all things, who ~~enjoyed~~  
Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,  
That whoso eats thereof forthwith attains

Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies  
The offence, that Man should thus attain to know?  
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree  
Impart against his will, if all be his?

Or is it envy? and can envy dwell  
In heavenly breasts?—These, these, and many  
more

730

Causes import your need of this fair fruit  
Goddess humane, reach then, and freely taste!"

He ended, and his words, replete with guile,  
Into her heart too easy entrance won.

Fixed on the fruit she gazed, which to behold  
Might tempt alone, and in her ears the sound  
Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregned  
With reason, to her seeming, and with truth.

Meanwhile the hour of noon drew on, and waked  
An eager appetite, raised by the smell      740  
So savory of that fruit, which with desire,  
Inclinable now grown to touch or taste,  
Solicited her longing eye; yet, first  
Pausing awhile, thus to herself she mused:

"Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits,  
Though kept from Man, and worthy to be  
admired;  
Whose taste, too long forborne, at first assay  
Gave elocution to the mute, and taught  
The tongue not made for speech to speak thy  
praise.

E

T AND  
IV

Thy praise lie also who forbids thy use      750  
Conceals not from us, naming thee the Tree  
Of Knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;  
Forbids us then to taste, but his forbidding  
Commends thee more, while it infers the good  
By thee communicated, and our want;  
For good unknown sure is not had; or had,  
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.  
In plain then, what forbids he but to know?  
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise.  
Such prohibitions bind not. But if death      760  
Bind us with after-band, what profits then  
Our inward freedom? In the day we eat  
Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die.  
How dies the Serpent? He hath eaten and lives,  
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and  
discerns,  
Irrational till then. For us alone  
Was death invented? or to us denied  
This intellectual food, for beasts reserved?  
For beasts it seems; yet that one beast, which first  
Hath tasted, envies not, but brings with joy      770  
The good befallen him, author unsuspect,  
Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile,  
What fear I then? rather, what know to fear  
Under this ignorance of good and evil,  
Of God or death, of law or penalty?  
Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,

Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,  
Of virtue to make wise. What hinders then  
To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?"

So saying, her rash hand in evil hour      780  
Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she eat.  
Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat,  
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,  
That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk  
The guilty Serpent; and well might, for Eve,  
Intent now wholly on her taste, nought else  
Regarded; such delight till then, as seemed,  
In fruit she never tasted; whether true  
Or fancied so, through expectation high  
Of knowledge; nor was Godhead from her  
thought.

Greedily she ingorged without restraint,      791  
And knew not eating death. Satiate at length,  
And hightened as with wine, jocund and boon,  
Thus to herself she pleasingly began:

"O sovran, virtuous, precious of all trees  
In Paradise! of operation blest  
To sapience, hitherto obscured, infamed,  
And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end  
Created! but henceforth my early care,  
Not without song, each morning, and due  
praise,"      800

Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease  
Of thy full branches, offered free to all;

E

T AND  
IV

Till, dieted by thee, I grow mature  
In knowledge, as the Gods, who all things know.  
Though others envy what they cannot give....  
For had the gift been theirs, it had not here  
Thus grown. Experience, next, to thee I owe,  
Best guide; not following thee, I had remained  
In ignorance; thou openest Wisdom's way,  
And givest access, though secret she retire. 810  
And I perhaps am secret. Heaven is high,  
High, and remote to see from thence distinct  
Each thing on Earth; and other care perhaps  
May have diverted from continual watch  
Our great Forbidd'r, safe with all his spies  
About him. But to Adam in what sort  
Shall I appear? shall I to him make known  
As yet my change, and give him to partake  
Full happiness with me, or rather not,  
But keep the odds of knowledge in my power, 820  
Without copartner? so to add what wants  
In female sex, the more to draw his love,  
And render me more equal, and perhaps,  
A thing not undesirable, sometime  
Superior; for inferior who is free?  
This may be well.—But what if God have seen,  
And death ensue? then I shall be no more,  
And Adam, wedded to another Eve,  
Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;  
A death to think! Confirmed then I resolve, 830

Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe.  
So dear I love him, that with him all deaths  
I could endure, without him live no life."

So saying, from the tree her step she turned;  
But first low reverence done, as to the Power  
That dwelt within, whose presence had infused  
Into the plant sciential sap, derived  
From nectar, drink of Gods. Adam the while,  
Waiting desirous her return, had wove  
Of choicest flowers a garland, to adorn      84c  
Her tresses, and her rural labors crown,  
As reapers oft are wont their harvest-queen.  
Great joy he promised to his thoughts, and new  
Solace in her return, so long delayed :  
Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill,  
Misgave him; he the faltering measure felt,  
And forth to meet her went, the way she took  
That morn when they first parted. By the Tree  
Of Knowledge he must pass, there he her met,  
Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand      850  
A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smiled,  
New gathered, and ambrosial smell diffused.  
To him she hasted; in her face Excuse  
Came prologue, and apology to prompt,  
Which, with bland words at will, she thus  
addressed :

"Hast thou not wondered Adam, at my stay ?  
Thee I have missed, and thought it long, deprived

E

T AND  
IX

Thy presence; agony of love till now  
Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more  
Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought, 860  
The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange  
Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear.  
This tree is not, as we are told, a tree  
Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown  
Opening the way, but of divine effect  
To open eyes, and make them Gods who taste;  
And hath been tasted such. The Serpent wise,  
Or not restrained as we, or not obeying,  
Hath eaten of the fruit, and is become,  
Not dead, as we are threatened, but thence-  
forth

870

Endued with human voice and human sense,  
Reasoning to admiration, and with me  
Persuasively hath so prevailed, that I  
Have also tasted, and have also found  
The effects to correspond; opener mine eyes,  
Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,  
And growing up to Godhead; which for thee  
Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise:  
For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss;  
Tedious, unshared with thee, and odious soon. 880  
Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot  
May join us, equal joy, as equal love;  
Lest, thou not tasting, different degree  
Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce

Deity for thee, when Fate will not permit."

Thus Eve with countenance blithe her story told;  
But in her cheek distemper flushing glowed.  
On the other side, Adam, soon as he heard  
The fatal trespass done by Eve, amazed,  
Astonied stood and blank, while horror chill 890  
Ran through his veins, and all his joints relaxed.  
From his slack hand the garland wreathed for Eve  
Down dropped, and all the faded roses shed.  
Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length  
First to himself he inward silence broke:

"O fairest of creation, last and best  
Of all God's works, creature in whom excelled  
Whatever can to sight or thought be formed,  
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!  
How art thou lost! how on a sudden lost, 900  
Defaced, deflowered, and now to death devote !  
Rather, how hast thou yielded to transgress  
The strict forbiddance, how to violate  
The sacred fruit forbidden ! Some cursed fraud  
Of enemy had beguiled thee, yet unknown,  
And me with thee hath ruined; for with thee  
Certain my resolution is to die.  
How can I live without thee! how forgo  
Thy sweet converse, and love so dearly joined,  
To live again in these wild woods forlorn! 910  
Should God create another Eve, and I  
Another rib afford, yet loss of thee

Would never from my heart. No no! I feel  
The link of nature draw me: flesh of flesh,  
Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state  
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe."

So having said, as one from sad dismay  
Recomforted, and, after thoughts disturbed,  
Submitting to what seemed remediless,  
Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turned: 920  
"Bold deed thou hast presumed, adventurous  
Eve,

And peril great provoked, who thus hast dared.—  
Had it been only coveting to eye  
That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence,  
Much more to taste it under ban to touch . . .  
But past who can recall, or done undo?  
Not God omnipotent, nor Fate. Yet so  
Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact  
Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,  
Profaned first by the Serpent, by him first 930  
Made common and unhallowed, ere our taste,  
Nor yet on him found deadly; yet he lives;  
Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live, as Man,  
Higher degree of life; inducement strong  
To us, as likely tasting to attain  
Proportional ascent; which cannot be  
But to be Gods, or Angels, demi-gods.  
Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,  
Though threatening, will in earnest so destroy

Us his prime creatures, dignified so high,  
Set over all his works, which, in our fall,  
For us created, needs with us must fail,  
Dependent made; so God shall uncreate,  
Be frustrate, do, undo, and labor lose;  
Not well conceived of God, who, though his power  
Creation could repeat, yet would be loth  
Us to abolish, lest the Adversary  
Triumph and say: 'Fickle their state whom God  
Most favors; who can please him long? Me first  
He ruined, now mankind; whom will he next?' 950  
Matter of scorn, not to be given the Foe.—  
However I with thee have fixed my lot,  
Certain to undergo like doom; if death  
Consort with thee, death is to me as life:  
So forcible within my heart I feel  
The bond of Nature draw me to my own;  
My own in thee, for what thou art is mine.  
Our state cannot be severed; we are one,  
One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself."

So Adam, and thus Eve to him replied: 960  
"O glorious trial of exceeding love,  
Illustrious evidence, example high!  
Engaging me to emulate; but, short  
Of thy perfection, how shall I attain?  
Adam! from whose dear side I boast me sprung  
And gladly of our union hear thee speak,  
One heart, one soul in both; whereof good proof

This day affords, declaring thee resolved,  
Rather than death, or aught than death more dread,  
Shall separate us, linked in love so dear, 97a  
To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,  
If any be, of tasting this fair fruit;  
Whose virtue—for of good still good proceeds  
Direct, or by occasion—hath presented  
This happy trial of thy love, which else  
So eminently never had been known.  
Were it I thought death menaced would ensue  
This my attempt, I would sustain alone  
The worst, and not persuade thee, rather die  
Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact 98a  
Pernicious to thy peace; chiefly assured  
Remarkably so late of thy so true,  
So faithful, love unequaled; but I feel  
Far otherwise the event; not death, but life  
Augmented, opened eyes, new hopes, new joys,  
Taste so divine, that what of sweet before  
Hath touched my sense flat seems to this, and  
harsh.

On my experience, Adami, freely taste,  
And fear of death deliver to the winds."

So saying, she embraced him, and for joy 990  
Tenderly wept; much won, that he his love  
Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur  
Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.  
In recompense—for such compliance bad

Such recompense best merits—from the bough  
She gave him of that fair enticing fruit  
With liberal hand. He scrupled not to eat,  
Against his better knowledge; not deceived,  
But fondly overcome with female charm.  
Earth trembled from her entrails, as again 1000  
In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan;  
Sky loured, and, muttering thunder, some sad  
drops

E

T AND  
IV

Wept at completing of the mortal sin  
Original; while Adam took no thought,  
Eating his fill, nor Eve to iterate  
Her former trespass feared, the more to soothe  
Him with her loved society; that now,  
As with new wine intoxicated both,  
They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel  
Divinity within them breeding wings, 1010  
Wherewith to scorn the earth. But that false fruit  
Far other operation first displayed,  
Carnal desire inflaming; he on Eve  
Began to cast lascivious eyes; she him  
As wantonly repaid; in lust they burn,  
Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move:

‘Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste  
And elegant, of sapience no small part;  
Since to each meaning savor we apply,  
And palate call judicious. I the praise 1020  
Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purveyed.

Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstained  
From this delightful fruit, nor known till now  
True relish, tasting. If such pleasure be  
In things to us forbidden, it might be wished  
For this one tree had been forbidden ten.  
But come, so well refreshed, now let us play,  
As meet is, after such delicious fare;  
For never did thy beauty, since the day,  
I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorned      1030  
With all perfections, so inflame my sense  
With ardor to enjoy thee, fairer now  
Than ever, bounty of this virtuous tree!"

So said he, and forbore not glance or toy  
Of amorous intent, well understood  
Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.  
Her hand he seized, and to a shady bank,  
Thick overhead with verdant roof imbowered,  
He led her nothing loth; flowers were the couch,  
Pansies and violets, and asphodel,      1040  
And hyacinth, earth's freshest softest lap.  
There they their fill of love and love's disport  
Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,  
The solace of their sin; till dewy sleep  
Oppressed them, wearied with their amorous play.  
Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,  
That with exhilarating vapor bland  
About their spirits had played, and inmost powers  
Made err, was now exhaled, and grosser sleep,

Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious  
dreams 1050

Incumbered, now had left them, up they rose  
As from unrest, and, each the other viewing,  
Soon found their eyes how opened, and their  
minds

How darkened. Innocence, that as a veil  
Had shadowed them from knowing ill, was gone;  
Just confidence, and native righteousness,

And honor, from about them, naked left  
To guilty Shame; he covered, but his robe

Uncovered more. So rose the Danite strong,  
Herculean Samson from the harlot-lap 1060

Of Philisteian Dalilah, and waked  
Shorn of his strength; they destitute and bare

Of all their virtue. Silent, and in face  
Confounded, long they sat, as stricken mute;  
Till Adam, though not less than Eve abashed,  
At length gave utterance to these words con-

strained:

‘O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give ear  
To that false worm, of whomsoever taught  
To counterfeit Man’s voice, true in our fall,  
False in our promised rising; since our eyes 1070  
Opened we find indeed, and find we know  
Both good and evil, good lost, and evil got;  
Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know,  
Which leaves us naked thus, of honor void,

E

T AND  
IV

Of innocence, of faith, of purity,  
Our wonted ornaments now soiled and stained,  
And in our faces evident the signs  
Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store,  
Even shame, the last of evils; of the first  
Be sure then. How shall I behold the face 1080  
Henceforth of God or Angel, erst with joy  
And rapture so oft beheld? Those heavenly shapes  
Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze  
Insufferably bright. Oh, might I here  
In solitude live savage, in some glade  
Obscured, where highest woods, impenetrable  
To star or sun-light, spread their umbrage broad,  
And brown as evening! Cover me, ye pines!  
Ye cedars, with innumerable boughs  
Hide me, where I may never see them more!—1090  
But let us now, as in bad plight, devise  
What best may for the present serve to hide  
The parts of each from other, that seem most  
To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen;  
Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves together  
sewed,  
And girded on our loins, may cover round  
Those middle parts, that this new-comer, Shame,  
There sit not, and reproach us as unclean."

So counselled he, and both together went  
Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose 1100  
The fig-tree; not that kind for fruit renowned,

But such as at this day, to Indians known,  
In Malabar or Decan spreads her arms  
Branching so broad and long, that in the ground  
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow  
About the mother-tree, a pillared shade,  
High overarched, and echoing walks between :  
There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,  
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds,  
At loopholes cut through thickest shade. Those  
leaves

E

T AND  
MY

They gathered, broad as Amazonian targe; 1111  
And, with what skill they had, together sewed,  
To gird their waist; vain covering, if to hide  
Their guilt and dreaded shame! Oh how unlike  
To that first naked glory! Such of late  
Columbus found the American, so girt  
With feathered cincture, naked else and wild,  
Among the trees on isles and woody shores.  
Thus fenced, and, as they thought, their shame  
in part

Covered, but not at rest or ease of mind, 1120  
They sat them down to weep; nor only tears  
Rained at their eyes, but high winds worse within  
Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,  
Mistrust, suspicion, discord, and shook sore  
Their inward state of mind, calm region once  
And full of peace, now tost and turbulent :  
For Understanding ruled not, and the Will

Heard not her lore, both in subjection now  
To sensual Appetite, who from beneath  
Usurping over sovran Reason claimed      1130  
Superior sway. From thus distempered breast,  
Adam, estranged in look and altered style,  
Speech intermitted thus to Eve renewed :

“Would thou hadst hearkened to my words, and  
stayed  
With me, as I besought thee, when that strange  
Desire of wandering, this unhappy morn,  
I know not whence possessed thee: we had then  
Remained still happy; not, as now, despoiled  
Of all our good, shamed, naked, miserable!  
Let none henceforth seek needless cause to ap-  
prove

The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek    1141  
Such proof, conclude they then begin to fail.”

To whom, soon moved with touch of blame,  
thus Eve :

“What words have passed thy lips, Adam severe?  
Imputest thou that to my default, or will  
Of wandering, as thou callest it, which who knows  
But might as ill have happened thou being by,  
Or to thyself perhaps? Hadst thou been there,  
Or here the attempt, thou couldst not have  
discerned

Fraud in the Serpent, speaking as he spake;    1150  
No ground of enmity between us known,

Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.  
Was I to have never parted from thy side?  
As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.  
Being as I am, why didst not thou, the head,  
Command me absolutely not to go?  
Going into such danger, as thcu saidst.  
Too facile then, thou didst not much gainsay,  
Say, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.  
Hadst thou been firm and fixed in thy dissent, 1160  
Neither had I transgressed, nor thou with me."

To whom, then first incensed, Adam replied:  
"Is this the love ? is this the recompense  
Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve, expressed  
Immutable when thou wert lost, not I ?  
Who might have lived, and enjoyed immortal bliss,  
Yet willingly chose rather death with thee.  
And am I now upbraided as the cause  
Of thy transgressing ? not enough severe,  
It seems, in thy restraint. What could I more? 1170  
I warned thee, I admonished thee, foretold  
The danger, and the lurking enemy.  
That lay in wait; beyond this had been force,  
And force upon free will hath here no place.  
But confidence then bore thee on, secure  
Either to meet no danger, or to find  
Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps  
I also erred, in overmuch admiring  
What seemed in thee so perfect, that I thought

E

T AND  
IV

No evil durst attempt thee; but I rue      1180  
That error now, which is become my crime,  
Aud thou the accuser. Thus it shall befall  
Him who, to worth in women overtrusting,  
Lets her will rule; restraint she will not brook,  
And, left to herself, if evil thence ensue,  
She first his weak indulgence will accuse."

Thus they in mutual accusation spent  
The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning  
And of their vain contest appeared no end.

# PARADISE LOST.

## BOOK X.

E

### THE ARGUMENT.

T AND  
MY

MAN's transgression know, the guardian Angels for-sake Paradise, and return up to Heaven to approve their vigilance, and are approved; God declaring that the entrance of Satan could not be by them prevented. He sends his Son to judge the transgressors, who de-scends and gives sentence accordingly; then in pity clothes them both, and reascends. Sin and Death sitting till then at the gates of Hell, by wondrous sympathy feeling the success of Satan in this new world, and the sin by Man there committed, resolve to sit no longer confined in Hell, but to follow Satan their sire up to the place of Man: to make the way easier from Hell to this world to and fro, they pave a broad high-way or bridge over Chaos, according to the track that Satan first made; then preparing for Earth, they meet him proud of his success returning to Hell; their mutual gratulation. Satan arrives at Pandemонium, in full assembly relates with boasting his success against Mân; instead of applause is enter-tained with a general hiss by all his audience. trans-formed with himself also suddenly into serpents, according to his doom given in Paradise; then, deluded with a show of the forbidden tree springing up before them, they, greedily reaching to take of the fruit, chew dust and bitter ashes. The proceedings of Sin and Death; God foretells the final victory of his Son over them, and the renewing of all things; but for the present commands his Angels to make several altera-

tions in the heavens and elements. Adam more and more perceiving his fallen condition heavily bewails, rejects the condolement of Eve; she persists, and at length appeases him: then, to evade the curse likely to fall on their offspring, proposes to adopt violent ways, which he approves not; but conceiving better hope, puts her in mind of the late promise made them, that her seed should be revenged on the Serpent, and exhorts her with him to seek peace of the offended Deity, by repentance and supplication.

MEANWHILE the heinous and despiteful act  
Of Satan done in Paradise, and how  
He in the Serpent had perverted Eve,  
Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,  
Was known in Heaven; for what can 'scape the eye  
Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart  
Omniscient? who, in all things wise and just,  
Hindered not Satan to attempt the mind  
Of Man, with strength entire, and free-will armed  
Complete to have discovered and repulsed      10  
Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend.  
For still they knew, and ought to have still  
remembered  
The high injunction not to taste that fruit,  
Whoever tempted; which they not obeying,  
Incurred—what could they less?—the penalty;  
And, manifold in sin, deserved to fall.  
Up into Heaven from Paradise in haste  
The angelic guards ascended, mute and sad  
For Man; for of his state by this they knew,

Much wondering how the subtle Fiend had  
stolen

20

Entrance unseen. Soon as the unwelcome news  
From Earth arrived at Heaven-gate, displeased  
All were who heard; dim sadness did not spare  
That time celestial visages, yet, mixed  
With pity, violated not their bliss.

E

About the new-arrived in multitudes  
The ethereal people ran, to hear and know  
How all befell. They toward the throne supreme,  
Accountable, made haste to make appear  
With righteous plea their utmost vigilance, 30  
And easily approved; when the Most High  
Eternal Father, from his secret cloud  
Amidst, in thunder uttered thus his voice:

T AND  
MY

"Assembled Angels, and ye Powers returned  
From unsuccessful charge, be not dismayed,  
Nor troubled at these tidings from the Earth,  
Which your sincerest care could not prevent;  
Foretold so lately what would come to pass,  
When first this Tempter crossed the gulf from  
Hell.

I told ye then he should prevail, and speed 40  
On his bad errand; Man should be seduced  
And flattered out of all, believing lies  
Against his Maker, no decree of mine  
Concurring to necessitate his fall,  
Or touch with lightest moment of impulse

His free-will, to her own inclining left  
In even scale. But fallen he is; and now  
What rests, but that the mortal sentence pass  
On his transgression, death denounced that day?  
Which he persumes already vain and void, 50  
Because not yet inflicted, as he feared,  
By some immediate stroke; but soon shall find  
Forbearance no acquittance, ere day end:  
Justice shall not return, as Bounty, scorned.  
But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee,  
Vicergerent Son? To thee I have transferred  
All judgement, whether in Heaven, or Earth, or  
Hell.

Easy it may be seen that I intend  
Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee  
Man's friend, his Mediator, his designed 60  
Both ransom and Redeemer voluntary,  
And destined Man himself to judge Man fallen."

So spake the Father; and, unfolding bright  
Toward the right hand his glory, on the Son  
Blazed forth unclouded deity: he full  
Resplendent all his Father manifest  
Express, and thus divinely answered mild:

"Father Eternal, thine is to decree;  
Mine, both in Heaven and Earth, to do thy will  
Supreme; that thou in me, thy Son beloved, 70  
Mayest ever rest well pleased. I go to judge  
On Earth these transgressors; but thou knowest.

Whoever judged, the worst on me must light,  
When time shall be; for so I undertook  
Before thée, and, not repenting, this obtain  
Of right, that I may mitigate their doom  
On me derived; yet I shall temper so  
Justice with mercy, as may illustrate most  
Them fully satisfied, and thee appease.  
Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none  
Are to behold the judgement, but the judged, 81  
Those two; the third best absent is condemned,  
Convict by flight, and rebel to all law;  
Conviction to the Serpent none belongs."

Thus saying, from his radiant seat he rose  
Of high collateral glory; him Thrones and  
Powers,  
Prinedoms, and Dominations ministrant  
Accompanied to Heaven-gate, from whence  
Eden and all the coast in prospect lay.  
Down he descended straight; the speed of Gods 90  
Time counts not, though with swiftest minutes  
winged.

Now was the sun in western cadence low  
From noon, and gentle airs, due at their hour,  
To fan the earth now waked, and usher in  
The evening cool, when he from wrath more cool  
Came, the mild judge and intercessor both,  
To sentence Man. The voice of God they heard,  
Now walking in the garden, by soft winds

Brought to their ears, while day declined; they  
heard,

And from his presence hid themselves, among 100  
The thickest trees, both man and wife, till God  
Approaching, thus to Adam called aloud:

"Where art thou, Adam, wont with joy to meet  
My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,  
Not pleased, thus entertained with solitude,  
Where obvious duty erewhile appeared, unsought  
Or come I less conspicuously? or what change  
Absents thee, or what chance detains? Come  
forth."

He came, and with him Eve, more loath, though  
first

To offend, discomfited both, and discomposed.  
Love was not in their looks, either to God 111  
Or to teach other, but apparent guilt,  
And shame, and perturbation, and despair,  
Anger, and obstinacy, and hate, and guile.

Whence Adam, faltering long, thus answered brief:  
"I heard thee in the garden, and of thy voice  
Afraid, being naked, hid myself." To whom  
The gracious Judge without revile replied:

"My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not feared,  
But still rejoiced; how is it now become 120  
So dreadful to thee? that thou art naked who  
Hath told thee? Hast thou eaten of the tree,  
Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?"

To whom thus Adam sore beset replied:  
‘O Heaven! in evil strait this day I stand,  
Before my Judge, either to undergo  
Myself the total crime, or to accuse  
My other self, the partner of my life;  
Whose failing, while her faith to me remains,  
I should conceal, and not expose to blame      130  
By my complaint. But strict necessity  
Subdues me, and calamitous constraint,  
Lest on my head both sin and punishment,  
However insupportable, be all  
Devolved; though should I hold my peace, yet thou  
Wouldst easily detect what I conceal.  
This Woman, whom thou madest to be my help,  
And gavest me as thy perfect gift, so good,  
So fit, so acceptable, so divine,  
That from her hand I could suspect no ill,      140  
And what she did, whatever in itself,  
Her doing seemed to justify the deed—  
She gave me of the tree, and I did eat.’

To whom the sovran Presence thus replied:  
‘Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey,  
Before his voice? or was she made thy guide,  
Superior, or but equal, that to her  
Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place  
Wherein God set thee above her, made of thee  
And for thee, whose perfection far excelled      150  
Hers in real dignity? Adorned

E

T AND  
MY

She was indeed, and lovely, to attract  
Thy love, not thy subjection; and her gifts  
Were such as under government well seeme;  
Unseemly to bear rule, which was thy part  
And person, hadst thou known thyself aright."

So having said, he thus to Eve in few:  
"Say, Woman, what is this which thou hast done?"

To who sad Eve, with shame nigh overwhelmed,  
Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge      160  
Bold or loquacious, thus abashed replied:  
"The Serpent me beguiled, and I did eat."

Which when the Lord God heard, without delay  
To judgment he proceeded on the accused  
Serpent, though brute, unable to transfer  
The guilt on him who made him instrument  
Of mischief, and polluted from the end  
Of his creation; justly then accursed,  
As vitiated in nature. More to know  
Concerned not Man—since he no further knew—  
Nor altered his offence. Yet God at last      171  
To Satan, first in sin, his doom applied,  
Though in mysterious terms, judged as then best;  
And on the Serpent thus his curse let fall:

"Because thou hast done this, thou art accursed  
Above all cattle, each beast of the field:  
Upon thy belly groveling thou shalt go,  
And dust shalt eat all the days of thy life.  
Between thee and the Woman I will put

Enmity, and between thine and her seed; 180  
Her seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his  
heel."

So spake this oracle, then verified  
When Jesus, son of Mary, second Eve,  
Saw Satan fall like lightning down from heaven,  
Prince of the air; then, rising from his grave,  
Spoiled Principalities and Powers, triumphed  
In open shew, and, with ascension bright,  
Captivity led captive through the air,  
The realm itself of Satan, long usurped,  
Whom he shall tread at last under our feet; 190

E

Even he who now foretold his fatal bruise,  
And to the Woman thus his sentence turned:

T AND  
IV

"Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply  
By thy conception; children thou shalt bring  
In sorrow forth; and to thy husband's will  
Thine shall submit; he over thee shall rule."

On Adam last thus judgment he pronounced:  
"Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy  
wife,

And eaten of the tree, concerning which 199  
I charged thee, saying, *Thou shall not eat thereof;*  
Cursed is the ground for thy sake; thou in sorrow  
Shalt eat thereof all the days of thy life;  
Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth,  
Unbid; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;  
In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,

Till thou return unto the ground; for thou  
Out of the ground was taken, know thy birth,  
For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return."

So judged he Man, both Judge and Savior sent,  
And the instant stroke of death, denounced that  
day,

Removed far off; then, pitying how they stood 211  
Before him naked to the air, that now  
Must suffer change, disdained not to begin  
Thenceforth the form of servant to assume;  
As when he washed his servants' feet, so now,  
As father of his family, he clad  
Their nakedness with skins of beasts, or slain,  
Or as the snake with youthful coat repaid;  
And thought not much to clothe his enemies.  
Nor he their outward only with the skins 220  
Of beasts, but inward nakedness, much more  
Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness  
Arraying, covered from his Father's sight.  
To him with swift ascent he up returned,  
Into his blissful bosom reassumed  
In glory, as of old; to him appealed  
All, though all-knowing, what had passed with  
Man  
Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.

Meanwhile, ere thus was sinned and judge  
on Earth,  
Within the gates of Hell sat Sin and Death 230

In counterview, within the gates, that now  
Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame  
Far into Chaos, since the Fiend passed through,  
Sin opening, who thus now to Death began:

"O son, why sit we here each other viewing  
Idly, while Satan, our great author, thrives  
In other worlds, and happier seat provides  
For us his offspring dear? It cannot be  
But that success attends him; if mishap,  
Ere this he had returned, with fury driven 240  
By his avengers, since no place like this  
Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.  
Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,  
Wings growing, and dominion given me large  
Beyond this Deep; whatever draws me on,  
Or sympathy, or some connatural force,  
Powerful at greatest distance to unite,  
With secret amity, things of like kind  
By secretest conveyance. Thou, my shade  
Inseparable, must with me along; 250  
For Death from Sin no power can separate.  
But, lest the difficulty of passing back  
Stay his return perhaps over this gulf  
Impassable, impervious, let us try—  
Adventurous work, yet to thy power and mine  
Not unagreeable—to found a path,  
Over this main, from Hell to that new World,  
Where Satan now prevails; a monument

E

T AND  
IV

Of merit high to all the infernal host,  
Easing their passage hence, for intercourse      260  
Or transmigration, as their lot shall lead.  
Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn  
By this new-felt attraction and instinct."

Whom thus the meagre shadow answered soon:  
"Go whither Fate and inclination strong  
Lead thee; I shall not lag behind, nor err  
The way, thou leading; such a sent I draw  
Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste  
The savor of death from all things there that live."

Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest      270  
Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid."

So saying, with delight he snuffed the smell  
Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock  
Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,  
Against the day of battle, to a field,  
Where armies lie encamped, come flying, lured  
With sent of living carcases designed  
For death, the following day, in bloody fight:  
So santed the grim Feature, and upturned  
His nostril wide into the murky air,      280  
Sagacious of his quarry from so far.  
Then both, from out Hell-gates, into the waste  
Wide anarchy of Chaos, damp and dark,  
Flew diverse; and with power—their power was  
great—

Hovering upon the waters, what they met  
Solid or slimy, as in raging sea  
Tost up and down, together crowded drove,  
From each side shoaling, toward the mouth of hell;  
—As when two polar winds, blowing adverse  
Upon the Cronian sea, together drive 290  
Mountains of ice, that stop the imagined way  
Beyond Petsora eastward to the rich  
Cathaian coast.—The aggregated soil  
Death with his mace petrific, cold and dry,  
As with a trident smote, and fixed as firm  
As Delos, floating once; the rest his look  
Bound with Gorgonian rigor not to move,  
And with asphaltic slime. Broad as the gate,  
Deep to the roots of Hell the gathered beach  
They fastened, and the mole immense wrought on,  
Over the foaming Deep high arched, a bridge 301  
Of length prodigious, joining to the wall  
Immovable of this now fenceless World,  
Forfeit to Death; from hence a passage broad,  
Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to Hell.  
So, if great things to small may be compared,  
Xerxes, the liberty of Greece to yoke,  
From Susa, his Memnonian palace high,  
Came to the sea, and, over Hellespont  
Bridging his way, Europe with Asia joined; 310  
And scourged with many a stroke the indignant  
waves.

E

T AND

IX

Now had they brought the work by wondrous art  
Pontifical, a ridge of pendent rock,  
Over the vexed Abyss, following the track  
Of Satan, to the selfsame place where he  
First lighted from his wing, and landed safe  
From out of Chaos, to the outside bare  
Of this round World: with pins of adamant  
And chains they made all fast, too fast they made  
And durable! And now in little space      32c  
The confines met of empyrean Heaven  
And of this World, and on the left hand Hell,  
With long reach interposed; three several ways,  
In sight, to each of these three places led.  
And now their way to Earth they had descried,  
To Paradise first tending; when, behold  
Satan, in likeness of an Angel bright,  
Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion steering  
His zenith, while the sun in Aries rose!  
Disguised he came; but those his children  
dear

330  
Their parent soon discerned, though in disguise.—  
He, after Eve seduced, unminded slunk  
Into the wood fast by, and, changing shape  
To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act  
By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded  
Upon her husband, saw their shame that sought  
Vain covertures; but when he saw descend  
The Son of God to judge them, terrified

He fled; not hoping to escape, but shun  
The present; fearing, guilty, what his wrath 340  
Might suddenly inflict. That past, returned  
By night, and, listening where the hapless pair  
Sat in their sad discourse and various plaint,  
Thence gathered his own doom, which understood  
Not instant, but of future time, with joy  
And tidings fraught, to Hell he now returned;  
And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot  
Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhoped  
Met who to meet him came, his offspring dear.  
Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight 350  
Of that stupendous bridge his joy increased.  
Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair  
Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broke :

"O parent, these are thy magnific deeds,  
Thy trophies! which thou viewest as not thine own:  
Thou art their author and prime architect.  
For I no sooner in my heart divined,  
My heart, which by a secret harmony  
Still moves with thine, joined in connection sweet,  
That thou on Earth hadst prospered, which thy  
looks

Now also evidence, but straight I felt 361  
Though distant from thee, worlds between, yet  
    felt  
That I must after thee with this thy son;  
Such fatal consequence unites us three !

E

T AND  
MY

Hell could no longer hold us in her bounds,  
Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure  
Detain from following thy illustrious track.  
Thou hast achieved our liberty, confined  
Within Hell-gates till now, thou us impowered  
To fortify thus far, and overlay                   370  
With this portentous bridge the dark Abyss.  
Thine now is all this World; thy virtue hath won  
What thy hands builded not, thy wisdom gained,  
With odds what war hath lost, and fully avenged  
Our foil in Heaven; here thou shalt monarch  
reign,  
There didst not. There let him still victor sway,  
As battle hath adjudged, from this new World  
Retiring, by his own doom alienated,  
And henceforth monarchy with thee divide  
Of all things, parted by the empyreal bounds,   380  
His quadrature, from thy orbicular World;  
Or try thee now more dangerous to his throne.”  
Whom thus the Prince of Darkness answered  
glad:  
“Fair daughter, and thou, son and grandchild  
both,  
High proof ye now have given to be the race  
Of Satan—for I glory in the name,  
Antagonist of Heaven’s almighty King—  
Amply have merited of me, of all  
The infernal empire, that so near Heaven’s door,

Triumphal with triumphal act, have met      390  
Mine with this glorious work, and made one realm  
Hell and this World, one realm, one continent  
Of easy thoroughfare. Therefore while I  
Descend through darkness, on your road with ease,  
To my associate powers, them to acquaint  
With these successes, and with them rejoice,  
You two this way, among these numerous orbs,  
All yours, right-down to Paradise descend;  
There dwell and reign in bliss; thence on the  
earth

Dominion exercise and in the air,      400  
Chiefly on Man, sole lord of all declared;  
Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.  
My substitutes I send ye, and create  
Plenipotent on earth, of matchless might  
Issuing from me. On your joint vigor now  
My hold of this new kingdom all depends,  
Through Sin to Death exposed by my exploit.  
If your joint power prevail, the affairs of Hell  
No detriment need fear; go, and be strong!"

So saying he dismissed them: they with  
speed      410  
Their course through thickest constellations held,  
Spreading their bane—the blasted stars looked  
wan,  
And planets, planet-struck, real eclipse  
Then suffered—The other way Satan went down

E

T AND  
MY

The causey to Hell-gate. On either side  
Disparted Chaos overbuilt exclaimed,  
And with rebounding surge the bars assailed  
That scorned his indignation. Through the gate,  
Wide-open and unguarded, Satan passed,  
And all about found desolate; for those      420  
Appointed to sit there had left their charge,  
Flown to the upper World; the rest were all  
Far to the inland retired, about the walls  
Of Pandemonium, city and proud seat  
Of Lucifer, so by allusion called  
Of that bright star to Satan paragoned.

There kept their watch the legions, while the  
Grand

In council sat, solicitous what chance  
Might intercept their emperor sent; so he  
Departing gave command, and they observed. 430  
As when the Tartar from his Russian foe,  
By Astracan, over the snowy plains,  
Retires; or Bactrian Sophi, from the horns  
Of Turkish crescent, leaves all waste beyond  
The realm af Aladule, in his retreat  
To Tauris or Casbeen: so these, the late  
Heaven-banished host, left desert utmost Hell  
Many a dark league, reduced in careful watch  
Round their metropolis, and now expecting  
Each hour their great adventurer from the  
search

440

Of foreign worlds. He through the midst unmarked,

In shew plebeian Angel militant  
Of lowest order, passed; and, from the door  
Of that Plutonian hall invisible,  
Ascended his high throne, which, under state  
Of richest texture spread, at the upper end  
Was placed in regal lustre. Down awhile  
He sat, and round about him saw unseen.

At last, as from a cloud, his fulgent head  
And shape star-bright appeared, or brighter,  
clad

450

With what permissive glory since his fall  
Was left him, or false glitter. All amazed  
At that so sudden blaze, the Stygian throng  
Bent their aspect, and whom they wished beheld,  
Their mighty Chief returned: loud was the acclaim.  
Forth rushed in haste the great consulting peers,  
Raised from their dark Divan, and with like joy  
Congratulant approached him, who with hand  
Silence, and with these words attention, won:

"Thrones, Dominations, Prinedoms, Virtues,  
Powers!

460

For in possession such, not only of right,  
I call ye, and declare ye now, returned,  
Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth  
Triumphant out of this infernal pit,  
Abominable, accursed, the house of woe,

E

T AND  
MY

And dungeon of our tyrant—now possess,  
As lords, a spacious world, to our native Heaven,  
Little inferior, by my adventure hard  
With peril great achieved. Long were to tell  
What I have done, what suffered, with what  
    pain

470

Voyaged the unreal, vast, unbounded Deep  
Of horrible confusion, over which  
By Sin and Death a broad way now is paved,  
To expedite your glorious march; but I  
Toiled out my uncouth passage, forced to ride  
The untractable Abyss, plunged in the womb  
Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild,  
That, jealous of their secrets, fiercely opposed  
My journey strange, with clamorous uproar,  
Protesting Fate supreme; thence how I found 480  
The new-created World, which fame in Heaven  
Long had foretold, a fabric wonderful,  
Of absolute perfection; therein Man  
Placed in a paradise, by our exile  
Made happy. Him by fraud I have seduced  
From his Creator, and, the more to increase  
Your wonder, with an apple! He thereat  
Offended—worth your laughter—hath given up  
Both his beloved Man and all his World  
To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us,      490  
Without our hazard, labor or alarm,  
To range in, and to dwell, and over Mar

To rule, as over all he shculd have ruled.  
True is, me also he hath judged, or rather  
Me not, but the brute serpent, in whose shape  
Man I deceived. That which to me belongs,  
Is enmity, which he will put between  
Me and mankind: I am to bruise his heel;  
His seed—when is not set—shall bruise my head.  
A world who would not purchase with a  
bruise,

500

Or much more grievous pain? Ye have the account  
Of my performance. What remains, ye Gods,  
But up, and enter now into full bliss?"

E

T AND  
MY

So having said, awhile he stood, expecting  
Their universal shout and high applause  
To fill his ear; when, contrary, he hears  
On all sides, from innumerable tongues,  
A dismal universal hiss, the sound  
Of public scorn. He wondered, but not long  
Had leisure, wondering at himself now more. 510  
His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,  
His arms clung to his ribs, his legs entwining  
Each other, till supplanted down he fell,  
A monstrous serpent, on his belly prone,  
Reluctant, but in vain; a greater power  
Now ruled him, punished in the shape he sinned,  
According to his doom. He would have spoke,  
But hiss for hiss returned with forked tongue  
**To forked tongue;** for now were all transformed

Alike to serpents, all as accessories  
To his bold riot. Dreadful was the din  
Of hissing through the hall, thick swarming now  
With complicated monsters, head and tail,  
Scorpion, and Asp, and Amphisbæna dire,  
Cerastes horned, Hydrus and Ellops drear  
And Dipsas—not so thick swarmed once the soil  
Bedropt with blood of Gorgon, or the isle  
Ophiusa—but still greatest he the midst,  
Now Dragon grown, larger than whom the Sun  
Ingendered in the Pythian vale on slime, 530  
Huge Python; and his power no less he seemed  
Above the rest still to retain. They all  
Him followed, issuing forth to the open field,  
Where all yet left of that revolted rout,  
Heaven-fallen, in station stood or just array,  
Sublime with expectation when to see  
In triumph issuing forth their glorious Chief;  
They saw, but other sight instead! a crowd  
Of ugly serpents. Horror on them fell,  
And horrid sympathy; for what they saw 540  
They felt themselves now changing. Down their  
arms,  
Down fell both spear and shield, down they as fast,  
And the dire hiss renewed, and the dire form  
Catched by contagion, like in punishment,  
As in their crime. Thus was the applause they  
meant

Turned to exploding hiss, triumph to shame,  
Cast on themselves from their own mouths.—

There stood

A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,  
His will who reigns above, to aggravate  
Their penance, laden with fair fruit, like that 550  
Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve  
Used by the Tempter. On that prospect strange  
Their earnest eyes they fixed, imagining  
For one forbidden tree a multitude

Now risen, to work them further woe or shame;  
Yet, parched with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,  
Though to delude them sent, could not abstain;  
But on they rolled in heaps, and up the trees  
Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky locks  
That curled Megæra. Greedily they plucked 560  
The fruitage, fair to sight, like that which grew  
Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flamed;  
This, more delusive, not the touch, but taste  
Deceived. They, fondly thinking to allay  
Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit  
Chewed bitter ashes, which the offended taste  
With spattering noise rejected. Oft they assayed,  
Hunger and thirst constraining; drugged as oft,  
With hatefulest disrelish, writhed their jaws  
With soot and cinders filled; so oft they fell 570  
Into the same illusion, not as Man

E

T AND  
MY

Whom they triumphed once lapsed: Thus were  
they plagued;  
And, worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,  
Till their lost shape, permitted, they resumed;  
Yearly enjoyed, some say, to undergo  
This annual humbling, certain numbered days,  
To dash their pride and joy for man seduced.  
However, some tradition they dispersed  
Among the Heathen of their purchase got,  
And fabled how the Serpent, whom they called 580  
Ophion with Eurynomè—the wide  
Encroaching Eve perhaps—had first the rule  
Of high Olympus, thence by Saturn driven  
And Ops, ere yet Dictæan Jove was born.

Meanwhile in Paradise the hellish pair  
Too soon arrived; Sin, there in power before,  
Once actual, now in body, and to dwell  
Habitual habitant; behind her Death,  
Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet  
On his pale horse; to whom Sin thus began: 590  
“Second of Satan sprung, all-conquering Death!  
What thinkest thou of our empire now, though  
earned  
With travail difficult? Not better far  
Than still at Hell’s dark threshold to have sat  
watch  
Unnamed, undreaded, and thyself half-starved?”

Whom thus the Sin-born monster answered  
soon:

"To me, who with eternal famine pine,  
Alike is Hell, or Paradise, or Heaven;  
There best, where most with ravin I may meet;  
Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems  
To stuff this maw, this vast unhinder-bound corpse."

To whom the incestuous mother thus re-  
plied: 602

"Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits, and  
flowers

Feed first; on each beast next, and fish, and fowl—  
No homely morsels—and, whatever thing  
The scythe of Time mows down, devour unspared;  
Till I, in Man residing, through the race,  
His thoughts, his looks, words, actions, all infect,  
And season him thy last and sweetest prey."

This said, they both betook them several ways,  
Both to destroy, or unimmortal make 611  
All kinds, and for destruction to mature  
Sooner or later; which the Almighty seeing,  
From his transcendent seat the Saints among,  
To those bright Orders uttered thus his voice:

"See with what heat these dogs of Hell ad-  
vance

To waste and havoc yonder World, which I  
So fair and good created, and had still  
Kept in that state, had not the folly of Man

E

T AND  
MY

620

Let in these wasteful furies, who impute  
Folly to me—so doth the Prince of Hell!  
And his adherents—that with so much ease  
I suffer them to enter and possess  
A place so heavenly, and conniving seem  
To gratify my scornful enemies,  
That laugh, as if, transported with some fit  
Of passion, I to them had quitted all,  
At random yielded up to their misrule;  
And know not that I called and drew them thither,  
My hell-hounds, to lick up the draf<sup>f</sup> and filth 630  
Which Man's polluting sin with taint hath shed  
On what was pure; till, crammed and gorged,  
nigh burst,  
With sucked and glutted offal, at one sling  
Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,  
Both Sin and Death, and yawning Grave at last,  
Through Chaos hrled, obstruct the mouth of Hell  
For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.  
Then Heaven and Earth renewed shall be made  
pure  
To sanctity that shall receive no stain.  
Till then the curse pronounced on both precedes.”  
He ended, and the heavenly audience loud 641  
Sung Hallelujah, as the sound of seas,  
Through multitude that sung:—‘Just are thy  
ways,  
Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;

Who can extenuate thee? Next, to the Son,  
Destined restorer of mankind, by whom  
New heaven and earth shall to the ages rise,  
Or down from Heaven descend.'—Such was  
their song;

E

T AND  
MY

While the Creator, calling forth by name  
His mighty Angels, gave them several charge, 650  
As sorted best with present things. The sun  
Had first his precept so to move, so shine,  
As might affect the earth with cold and heat  
Scarce tolerable, and from the north to call  
Decrepit winter, from the south to bring  
Solstitial summer's heat; to the blanc moon  
Her office they prescribed; to the other five  
Their planetary motions and aspects,  
In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite  
Of noxious efficacy, and when to join 660  
In synod unbenign; and taught the fixed  
Their influence malignant when to shower,  
Which of them, rising with the sun or falling,  
Should prove tempestuous: to the winds they set  
Their corners, when with bluster to confound  
Sea, air, and shore; the thunder when to roll  
With terror through the dark aërial hall.  
Some say, he bid his Angels turn askance  
The poles of earth twice ten degrees and more  
From the sun's axle; they with labor pushed 670  
Oblique the centric globe: some say, the sun

Was bid turn reins from the equinoctial road  
Like distant breadth to Taurus with the seven  
Atlantic Sisters, and the Spartan Twins,  
Up to the Tropic Crab; thence down again  
By Leo and the Virgin and the Scales,  
As deep as Capricorn, to bring in change  
Of seasons to each clime. Else had the spring  
Perpetual smiled on Earth with vernant flowers,  
Equal in days and nights, except to those 680  
Beyond the polar circles; to them day  
Had unenlighted shone, while the low sun,  
To recompense his distance, in their sight  
Had rounded still the horizon, and not known  
Or east or west; which had forbid the snow  
From cold Estotiland, and south as far  
Beneath Magellan. At that tasted fruit  
The sun, as from Thyestean banquet, turned  
His course intended; else how had the world  
Inhabited, though sinless, more than now 690  
Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?

These changes in the heavens, though slow,  
produced  
Like change on sea and land, sideral blast,  
Vapor, and mist, and exhalation hot,  
Corrupt and pestilent. Now from the north  
Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,  
Bursting their brazen dungeon, armed with ice,  
**And** snow, and hail, and stormy gust and flaw,

Boreas, and Cæcias, and Argestes loud,  
And Thrascias rend the woods and seas  
upturn; 700

With adverse blast upturns them from the south  
Notus and Afer, black with thunderous clouds  
From Serralionia; thwart of these, as fierce,  
Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent winds,  
Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise,  
Sirocco, and Libecchio. Thus began  
Outrage from lifeless things; but Discord first,  
Daughter of Sin, among the irrational  
Death introduced, through fierce antipathy.

Beast now with beast gan war, and fowl with fowl,  
And fish with fish; to graze the herb all  
leaving 711

Devoured each other; nor stood much in awe  
Of Man, but fled him, or with countenance grim  
Glared on him passing. These were from without  
The growing miseries, which Adam saw  
Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,  
To sorrow abandoned, but worse felt within,  
And, in a troubled sea of passion tost,  
Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint:

"O miserable of happy! is this the end 720  
Of this new glorious Wcrld? and me so late  
The glory of that glory? who now, become  
Accursed of blessed, hide me from the face  
Of God, whom to behold was then my highth

E  
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MY

Of happiness. Yet well, if here would end  
The misery; I deserved it, and would bear  
My own deservings. But this will not serve;  
All that I eat and drink, or shall beget,  
Is propagated curse. O voice once heard  
Delightfully, *Encrease and multiply,* 730  
Now death to hear! for what can I encrease  
Or multiply, but curses on my head?  
Who of all ages to succeed, but, feeling  
The evil on him brought by me, will curse  
My head? *Ill fare our ancestor impure*  
*For this we may thank Adam!* but his thanks ,  
Shall be the execration. So, besides  
Mine own that bide upon me, all from me  
Shall with a fierce reflux on me redound;  
On me, as on their natural centre, light, 740  
Heavy though in their place O fleeting joys  
Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woe!  
Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay  
To mould me Man? did I solicit thee  
From darkness to promote me, or here place  
In this delicious garden? As my will  
Concurred not to my being, it were but right  
And equal to reduce me to my dust,  
Desirous to resign and render back  
All I received, unable to perform 750  
Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold  
The good I sought not. To the loss of that,

Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added  
The sense of endless woes? inexplicable  
Thy justice seems. Yet, to say truth, too late  
I thus contest; then should have been refused  
Those terms whatever, when they were proposed.  
Thou didst accept them: wilt thou enjoy the good,  
Then cavil the condition? And, though God  
Made thee without thy leave, what if thy son 760  
Prove disobedient, and reproved retort:

*Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not!*  
Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee  
That proud excuse? yet him not thy election,  
But natural necessity, begot.

God made thee of choice his own, and of his own  
To serve him; thy reward was of his grace,  
Thy punishment then justly is at his will.  
Be it so, for I submit; his doom is fair,

That dust I am, and shall to dust return. 770

O welcome hour whenever! Why delays  
His hand to execute what his decree  
Fixed on this day? Why do I overlive?  
Why am I mocked with death, and lengthened out  
To deathless pain? How gladly would I meet  
Mortality, my sentence, and be earth  
In sensible! how glad would lay me down  
As in my mother's lap! There I should rest,  
And sleep secure; his dreadful voice no more  
Would thunder in my ears; no fear of worse 780

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To me and to my offspring would torment me  
With cruel expectation.—Yet one doubt  
Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die;  
Lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of Man  
Which God inspired, cannot together perish  
With this corporeal clod. Then in the grave,  
Or in some other dismal place, who knows  
But I shall die a living death? O thought  
Horrid, if true! Yet why? it was but breath  
Of life that sinned. What dies but what had  
life

79c

And sin? the body properly hath neither.  
All of me then shall die. Let this appease  
The doubt, since human reach no further knows.  
For though the Lord of all be infinite,  
Is his wrath also? Be it, Man is not so,  
But mortal doomed. How can he exercise  
Wrath without end on Man, whom death must end?  
Can he make deathless death? That were to make  
Strange contradiction, which to God himself  
Impossible is held, as argument

800

Of weakness, not of power. Will he draw out,  
For anger's sake, finite to infinite  
In punished Man, to satisfy his rigor  
Satisfied never? That were to extend  
His sentence beyond dust and Nature's law,  
By which all causes else, according still  
To the reception of their matter, act.

Not to the extent of their own sphere. But say  
That death be not one stroke, as I supposed,  
Bereaving sense, but endless misery                810  
From this day onward, which I feel begun  
Both in me, and without me, and so last  
To perpetuity . . . Ay me ! that fear  
Comes thundering back with dreadful revolution  
On my defenceless head. Both Death and I  
Am found eternal, and incorporate both;  
Nor I on my part single; in me all  
Posterity stands cursed. Fair patrimony  
That I must leave ye, sons ! Oh, were I able  
To waste it all myself, and leave ye none !        820  
So disinherited, how would ye bless  
Me, now you curse ! Ah, why should all mankind  
For one man's fault, thus guiltless be condemned?—  
If guiltless; but from me what can proceed  
But all corrupt, both mind and will depraved  
Not to do only, but to will the same  
With me ? How can they then acquitted stand  
In sight of God ? Him, after all disputes,  
Forced I absolve; all my evasions vain,  
And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me  
still  
But to my own conviction: first and last        831  
On me, me only, as the source and spring  
Of all corruption, all the blame lights due;

So might the wrath ! Fond wish ! couldst thou  
support

That burden, heavier than the Earth to bear;  
Than all the World much heavier, though divided  
With that bad Woman ? Thus, what thou desirest,  
And what thou fearest, alike destroys all hope  
Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable,  
Beyond all past example and future; 840  
To Satan only like, both crime and doom.  
O Conscience, into what abyss of fears  
And horrors hast thou driven me ! out of which  
I find no way, from deep to deeper plunged."

Thus Adam to himself lamented loud,  
Through the still night; not now, as ere Man fell,  
Wholesome, and cool, and mild, but with black air  
Accompanied, with damps and dreadful gloom;  
Which to his evil conscience represented  
All things with double terror. On the ground 850  
Outstretched he lay, on the cold ground, and oft  
Cursed his creation, Death as oft accused  
Of tardy execution, since denounced.

The day of his offence. "Why comes not Death,"  
Said he, "with one thrice acceptable stroke  
To end me? shall Truth fail to keep her word?  
Justice divine not hasten to be just?  
But Death comes not at call, Justice divine  
Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries.  
O woods, O fountains, hillocks, dales, and bowers!

With other echo late I taught your shades 861  
To answer, and resound far other song."—  
Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,  
Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,  
Soft words to his fierce passion she assayed;  
But her with stern regard he thus repelled:

"Out of my sight, thou serpent ! that name best  
Befits thee with him leagued, thyself as false  
And hateful. Nothing wants, but that thy shape  
Like his, and color serpentine, may shew 870  
Thy inward fraud, to warn all creatures from thee  
Henceforth; lest that too heavenly form, pre-  
tended

To hellish falsehood, snare them. But for thee  
I had persisted happy; had not thy pride  
And wandering vanity, when least was safe,  
Rejected my forewarning, and disdained  
Not to be trusted; longing to be seen,  
Though by the Devil himself; him overweening  
To over-reach; but, with the serpent meeting,  
Fooled and beguiled, by him thou, I by thee, 880  
To trust thee from my side; imagined wise,  
Constant, mature; proof against all assaults;  
And understood not all was but a shew,  
Rather than solid virtue; all but a rib  
Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears,  
More to the part sinister, from me drawn;  
Well if thrown out, as supernumerary

To my just number found. Oh, why did God,  
Creator wise, that peopled highest Heaven  
With Spirits masculine, create at last 890  
This novelty on Earth, this fair defect  
Of Nature, and not fill the world at once  
With men as Angels, without feminine?  
Or find some other way to generate  
Mankind? This mischief had not then befallen,  
And more that shall befall; innumerable  
Disturbances on Earth through female snares,  
And strait conjunction with this sex. For either  
He never shall find out fit mate, but such 900  
As some misfortune brings him, or mistake;  
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain,  
Through her perverseness, but shall see her gained  
By a far worse; or, if she love, withheld  
By parents; or his happiest choice too late  
Shall meet; already linked and wedlock-bound  
To a fell adversary, his hate or shame:  
Which infinite calamity shall cause  
To human life, and household peace confound."

He added not, and from her turned; but Eve,  
Not so repulsed, with tears that ceased not flowing,  
And tresses all disordered at his feet 911  
Fell humble, and, embracing them, besought  
His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint:

"Forsake me not thus, Adam! witness Heaven  
What love sincere and reverence in my heart

I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,  
Unhappily deceived! Thy suppliant  
I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,  
Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,  
Thy counsel, in this uttermost distress      920  
My only strength and stay. Forlorn of thee  
Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?  
While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,  
Between us two let there be peace; both rejoicing,  
As joined in injuries, one enmity  
Against a foe by doom express assigned us,  
That cruel Serpent. On me exercise not  
Thy hatred for this misery befallen,  
On me already lost, me than thyself  
More miserable. Both have sinned, but thou      930  
Against God only, I against God and thee;  
And to the place of judgement will return,  
There with my cries importune Heaven, that all  
The sentence, from thy head removed, may light  
On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe,  
Me, me only, just object of his ire."

She ended weeping, and her lowly plight,  
Immovable till peace obtained from fault  
Acknowledged and deplored, to Adam wrought  
Commiseration. Soon his heart relented      940  
Toward her, his life so late and sole delight,  
Now at his feet submissive in distress;  
Creature so fair his reconcilement seeking,

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His counsel, whom she had displeased, his aid.  
As one disarmed, his anger all he lost,  
And thus with peaceful words upraised her soon:

“Unwary, and too desirous, as before  
So now, of what thou knowest not, who desirest  
The punishment all on thyself. Alas!  
Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain      950  
His full wrath, whose thou feelest as yet least part,  
And my displeasure bearest so ill. If prayers  
Could alter high decrees, I to that place  
Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,  
That on my head all might be visited :  
Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiven,  
To me committed, and by me exposed.  
But rise; let us no more contend, nor blame  
Each other, blamed enough elsewhere, but strive,  
In offices of love, how we may lighten      960  
Each other’s burden, in our share of woe;  
Since this day’s death denounced, if aught I see,  
Will prove no sudden, but a slow-paced evil,  
A long day’s dying, to augment our pain,  
And to our seed—O hapless seed!—derived.”

To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, replied:  
“Adam, by sad experiment I know  
How little weight my words with thee can find,  
Found so erroneous; thence by just event  
Found so unfortunate. Nevertheless,      970  
Restored by thee, vile as I am, to place

Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain  
Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart,  
Living or dying, from thee I will not hide  
What thoughts in my unquiet breast are risen,  
Tending to some relief of our extremes,  
Or end; though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,  
As in our evils, and of easier choice.  
If care of our descent perplex us most,  
Which must be born to certain woe, devoured 980  
By Death at last—and miserable it is  
To be to others cause of misery.  
Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring  
Into this cursed world a woeful race,  
That after wretched life must be at last  
Food for so foul a monster—in thy power  
It lies, yet ere conception, to prevent  
The race unblest, to being yet unbegot.  
Childless thou art, childless remain; so Death  
Shall be deceived his glut, and with us two 990  
Be forced to satisfy his ravenous maw.  
But if thou judge it hard and difficult,  
Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain  
From love's due rights, nuptial embraces sweet,  
And with desire to languish without hope,  
Before the present object languishing  
With like desire, which would be misery  
And torment less than none of what we dread;  
Then, both ourselves and seed at once to free

CE

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MY

From what we fear for both, let us make short, 1000  
Let us seek Death, or, lie not found, supply  
With our own hands his office on ourselves.  
Why stand we longer shivering under fears,  
That shew no end but death, and have the power,  
Of many ways to die the shortest choosing,  
Destruction with destruction to destroy?"

She ended here, or vehement despair  
Broke off the rest; so much of death her thoughts  
Had entertained as dyed her cheeks with pale.  
But Adam, with such counsel nothing swayed, 1010  
To better hopes his more attentive mind  
Laboring had raised, and thus to Eve replied:

"Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems  
To argue in thee something more sublime  
And excellent than what thy mind contemns;  
But self-destruction therefore sought refutes  
That excellence thought in thee, and implies  
Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret  
For loss of life and pleasure overloved.

Or if thou covet death, as utmost end 1020  
Of misery, so thinking to evade  
The penalty pronounced, doubt not but God  
Hath wiser armed his vengeful ire than so  
To be forestalled; much more I fear lest death,  
So snatched, will not exempt us from the pain  
We are by doom to pay; rather such acts  
Of contumacy will provoke the Highest

To make death in us live. Then let us seek  
Some safer resolution, which methinks  
I have in view, calling to mind with heed 1030  
Part of our sentence, that thy seed shall bruise  
The Serpent's head: piteous amends! unless  
Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe,  
Satan, who in the serpent hath contrived  
Against us this deceit. To crush his head  
Would be revenge indeed; which will be lost  
By death brought on ourselves, or childless days  
Resolved as thou proposest; so our foe  
Shall scape his punishment ordained, and we  
Instead shall double ours upon our heads. 1040  
No more be mentioned then of violence  
Against ourselves, and wilful barrenness,  
That cuts us off from hope, and savors only  
Rancour and pride, impatience and despite,  
Reluctance against God and his just yoke  
Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild  
And gracious temper he both heard and judged,  
Without wrath or reviling. We expected  
Immediate dissolution, which we thought  
Was meant by death that day; when lo! to thee  
Pains only in child-bearing were foretold, 1051  
And bringing forth, soon recompensed with joy,  
Fruit of thy womb; on me the curse aslope  
Glanced on the ground. With labor I must earn  
My bread; what harm? Idleness had been worse.

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My labor will sustain me; and, lest cold  
Or heat should injure us, his timely care  
Hath unbesought provided, and his hands  
Clothed us unworthy, pitying while he judged.  
How much more, if we pray him, will his ear 1060  
Be open, and his heart to pity incline,  
And teach us further by what means to shun  
The inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail, and snow!  
Which now the sky, with various face, begins  
To shew us in this mountain, while the winds  
Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks  
Of these fair spreading trees; which bids us seek  
Some better shroud, some better warmth, to  
cherish

Our limbs benumbed, ere this diurnal star  
Leave cold the night; how we his gathered beams  
Reflected may with matter sere foment, 1071  
Or by collision of two bodies grind  
The air attrite to fire; as late the clouds,  
Justling, or pushed with winds, rude in their  
shock,  
Tine the slant lightning, whose thwart flame  
driven down  
Kindles the gummy bark of fir or pine,  
And sends a comfortable heat from far,  
Which might supply the sun. Such fire to use,  
And what may else be remedy or cure  
To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought,

He will instruct us praying, and of grace  
Beseeching him; so as we need not fear  
To pass commodiously this life, sustained  
By him with many comforts, till we end  
In dust, our final rest and native home.  
What better can we do, than to the place  
Repairing where he judged us, prostrate fall  
Before him reverent, and there confess  
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears  
Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air  
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in  
sign

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1091  
Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek?  
Undoubtedly he will relent, and turn  
From his displeasure, in whose look, serene,  
When angry most he seemed and most severe,  
What else but favor, grace, and mercy shone?"

So spake our father penitent, nor Eve  
Felt less remorse. They forthwith, to the place  
Repairing where he judged them, prostrate fell  
Before him reverent, and both confessed

1100

Humbly, their faults and pardon begged, with  
tears  
Watering the ground, and with their sighs the  
air

Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign  
Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek.

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# PARADISE LOST.

## BOOK XI.

### THE ARGUMENT.

THE Son of God presents to his Father the prayers of our first parents now repenting, and intercedes for them. God accepts them, but declares that they must no longer abide in Paradise: sends Michael with a band of Cherubim to dispossess them; but first to reveal to Adam future things: Michael's coming down. Adam shews to Eve certain ominous signs; he discerns Michael's approach; goes out to meet him; the Angel denounces their departure. Eve's lamentation. Adam pleads, but submits: The Angel leads him up to a high hill; sets before him in vision what shall happen till the Flood.

THUS they in lowliest plight repentant stood,  
Praying; for from the mercy-seat above  
Prevenient grace descending had removed  
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh  
Regenerate grow instead, that sighs now breathed  
Unutterable, which the Spirit of prayer  
Inspired, and winged for Heaven with speedier  
flight  
Than loudest oratory. Yet their port  
Not of mean suitors, nor important less

Seemed their petition, than when the ancient pair,

In fables old, less ancient yet than these,      11  
Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore

The race of mankind drowned, before the shrine  
Of Themis stood devout. To Heaven their prayers  
Flew up, nor missed the way, by envious winds  
Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they passed  
Dimensionless through heavenly doors; then clad  
With incense, where the golden altar fumed,

By their great Intercessor, came in sight  
Before the Father's throne.    Them the glad Son  
Presenting thus to intercede began:

"See, Father, what first-fruits on Earth are  
sprung

From thy implanted grace in Man; these sighs  
And prayers, which in this golden censor, mixed  
With incense, I thy priest before thee bring;  
Fruits of more pleasing savor, from thy seed  
Sown with contrition in his heart, than those  
Which, his own hand manuring, all the trees  
Of Paradise could have produced, ere fallen  
From innocence. Now therefore bend thine ear 30  
To supplication; hear his sighs, though mute;  
Unskillful with what words to pray, let me  
Interpret for him, me his advocate  
And propitiation; all his works on me,  
Good or not good, ingraft; my merit those

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MY

Shall perfect, and for these my death shall pay.  
Accept me, and in me from these receive  
The smell of peace toward Mankind: let him live  
Before thee reconciled, at least his days  
Numbered, though sad; till death, his doom—  
which I

To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse— 41  
To better life shall yield him, where with me  
All my redeemed may dwell in joy and blisse,  
Made one with me, as I with thee am one.”

To whom the Father, without cloud, serene:  
“All thy request for Man, accepted Son,  
Obtain; all thy request was my decree.  
But, longer in that Paradise to dwell  
The law I gave to Nature him forbids;  
Those pure immortal elements, that know 50  
No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,  
Eject him, tainted now, and purge him off,  
As a distemper, gross, to air as gross,  
And mortal food, as may dispose him best  
For dissolution wrought by sin, that first  
Distempered all things, and of incorrupt  
Corrupted. I at first with two fair gifts  
Created him endowed, with happiness  
And immortality; that fondly lost,  
This other served but to eternize woe, 60  
Till I provided death: so death becomes  
His final remedy, and, after life

Tried in sharp tribulation and refined  
By faith and faithful works, to second life,  
Waked in the renovation of the just,  
Resigns him up with heaven and earth renewed.—  
But let us call to synod all the Blest  
Through Heaven's wide bounds; from them I will  
    not hide

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My judgments, how with Mankind I proceed,  
As how with peccant Angels late they saw,     70  
And in their state, though firm, stood more con-  
firmed.”

He ended, and the Son gave signal high  
To the bright minister that watched. He blew  
His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps  
When God descended, and perhaps once more  
To sound at general doom. The angelic blast  
Filled all the regions. From their blissful bowers  
Of amarantine shade, fountain or spring,  
By the waters of life, where'er they sat  
In fellowships of joy, the Sons of Light     80  
Hasted, resorting to the summons high,  
And took their seats, till from his throne supreme  
The Almighty thus pronounced his sovran will :

“O Sons, like one of us Man is become  
To know both good and evil, since his taste  
Of that defended fruit. But let him boast  
His knowledge of good lost and evil got,  
Happier, had it sufficed him to have known

Good by itself, and evil not at all.  
His sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite, 90  
My motions in him; longer than they move . . .  
His heart I know how variable and vain,  
Self-left. Lest therefore his now bolder hand  
Reach also of the Tree of Life, and eat,  
And live for ever, dream at least to live  
For ever, to remove him I decree,  
And send him from the garden forth, to till  
The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil.

“Michael, this my behest have thou in charge.  
Take to thee, from among the Cherubim, 100  
Thy choice of flaming warriors; lest the Fiend,  
Or in behalf of Man, or to invade  
Vacant possession, some new trouble raise.  
Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God  
Without remorse drive out the sinful pair,  
From hallowed ground the unholy, and denounce  
To them and to their progeny from thence  
Perpetual banishment. Yet, lest they faint  
At the sad sentence rigorously urged—  
For I behold them softened, and with tears 110  
Bewailing their excess—all terror hide.  
If patiently thy bidding they obey,  
Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal  
To Adam what shall come in future days,  
As I shall thee enlighten; intermix  
My covenant in the Woman’s seed renewed.

So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in  
peace;

And on the east side of the garden place,  
Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,  
Cherubic watch, and of a sword the flame      120  
Wide-waving, all approach far off to fright,  
And guard all passage to the Tree of Life;  
Lest Paradise a receptacle prove

To Spirits foul, and all my trees their prey,  
With whose stolen fruit Man once more to delude."

He ceased, and the archangelic Power prepared  
For swift descent; with him the cohort bright  
Of watchful Cherubim. Four faces each  
Had, like a double Janus, all their shape  
Spangled with eyes, more numerous than those 130  
Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse,  
Charmed with Arcadian pipe, the pastoral reed  
Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Meanwhile,  
To resolute the World with sacred light,  
Leucothea waked, and with fresh dews embalmed  
The earth; when Adam and first matron Eve  
Had ended now their orisons, and found  
Strength added from above, new hope to spring  
Out of despair, joy, but with fear yet linked;  
Which thus to Eve his welcome words re-  
newed :

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"Eve, easily may faith admit that all  
The good which we enjoy from Heaven descend

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But that from us aught should ascend to Heaven  
So prevalent as to concern the mind  
Of God high-biest, or to incline his will,  
Hard to belief may seem; yet this will prayer  
Or one short sigh of human breath, up-borne  
Even to the seat of God. For since I sought  
By prayer the offended Deity to appease,  
Kneeled and before him humbled all my heart, 150  
Methought I saw him, placable and mild,  
Bending his ear; persuasion in me grew  
That I was heard with favor; peace returned  
Home to my breast, and to my memory  
His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our Foe;  
Which, then not minded in dismay, yet now  
Assures me that the bitterness of death  
Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee!  
Eve rightly called, Mother of all Mankind,  
Mother of all things living, since by thee 160  
Man is to live, and all things live for Man."

To whom thus Eve with sad demeanor meek:  
"Ill-worthy I such title should belong  
To me transgressor, who, for thee ordained  
A help, became thy snare; to me reproach  
Rather belongs, distrust and all dispraise.  
But infinite in pardon was my Judge,  
That I, who first brought death on all, am graced  
The source of life; next favorable thou,  
Who highly thus to entitle me vouchsafest, 170

Far other name deserving.—But the field  
To labor calls us, now with sweat imposed,  
Though after sleepless night; for see! the Morn,  
All unconcerned with our unrest, begins  
Her rosy progress smiling. Let us forth,  
I never from thy side henceforth to stray,  
Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoined  
Laborious, till day droop. While here we dwell  
—What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?—  
Here let us live, though in fallen state, content.”

180

CE

CT AND  
MY

So spake, so wished much-humbled Eve, but  
Fate

Subscribed not. Nature first gave signs, impressed  
On bird, beast, air; air suddenly eclipsed,  
After short blush of morn. Nigh in her sight  
The bird of Jove, stooped from his airy tour,  
Two birds of gayest plume before him drove;  
Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,  
First hunter then, pursued a gentle brace,  
Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind;  
Direct to the eastern gate was bent their flight. 190  
Adam observed, and, with his eye the chase  
Pursuing, not unmoved to Eve thus spake:

“O Eve, some further change awaits us nigh,  
Which Heaven by these mute signs in Nature  
shews,

Forerunners of his purpose, or to warn

Us, haply too secure of our discharge  
From penalty, because from death released  
Some days; how long, and what till then our life,  
Who knows, or more than this, that we are dust,  
And thither must return, and be no more? 200  
Why else this double object in our sight  
Of flight, pursued in the air and o'er the ground,  
One way the selfsame hour? Why in the east  
Darkness ere day's mid-course, and morning light  
More orient in yon western cloud, that draws  
O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,  
And slow descends, with something heavenly  
fraught?"

He erred not; for by this the heavenly bands,  
Down from a sky of jasper, lighted now  
In Paradise, and on a hill made halt; 210  
A glorious apparition, had not doubt  
And carnal fear that day dimmed Adam's eye.  
Not that more glorious, when the Angels met  
Jacob in Mahanaïm, where he saw  
The field pavilioned with his guardians bright;  
Nor that which on the flaming mount appeared,  
In Dothan, covered with a camp of fire,  
Against the Syrian king, who to surprise  
One man, assassin-like, had levied war,  
War unproclaimed. The princely Hierarch 220  
In their bright stand there left his powers, to seize  
Possession of the garden; he alone,

To find where Adam sheltered, took his way,  
Not unperceived of Adam, who to Eve,  
While the great visitant approached, thus spake:

"Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps  
Of us will soon determine, or impose  
New laws to be observed; for I descry,  
From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,  
One of the heavenly host, and by his gait      230  
None of the meanest; some great Potentate  
Or of the Thrones above, such majesty  
Invests him coming; yet not terrible  
That I should fear, nor sociably mild,  
As Raphaël, that I should much confide;  
But solemn and sublime, whom not to offend  
With reverence I must meet, and thou retire."

He ended; and the Archangel soon drew nigh,  
Not in his shape celestial, but as man  
Clad to meet man. Over his lucid arms      240  
A military vest of purple flowed,  
Livelier than Melibœan, or the grain  
Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old,  
In time of truce; Iris had dipt the woof.  
His starry helm unbuckled shewed him prime  
In manhood where youth ended; by his side,  
As in a glistering zodiac, hung the sword,  
Satan's dire dread, and in his hand the spear.  
Adam bowed low; he kingly from his state  
Inclined not, but his coming thus declared :    250

CE

CT AND  
MY

"Adam, Heaven's high behest no preface needs.  
Sufficient that thy prayers are heard, and Death,  
Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,  
Defeated of his seizure, many days  
Given thee of grace, wherein thou mayest repent,  
And one bad act with many deeds well done  
Mayst cover. Well may then thy Lord, appeased,  
Redeem thee quite from Death's rapacious claim;  
But longer in this Paradise to dwell  
Permits not : to remove thee I am come,      260  
And send thee from the garden forth, to till  
The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil."

He added not; for Adam at the news  
Heart-struck with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,  
That all his senses bound; Eve, who unseen  
Yet all had heard, with audible lament  
Discovered soon the place of her retire:

"O unexpected stroke, worse than of Death!  
Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? thus leave  
Thee, native soil! these happy walks and  
shades,      270

Fit haunt of Gods? where I had hope to spend,  
Quiet though sad, the respite of that day  
That must be mortal to us both. O flowers,  
That never will in other climate grow,  
My early visitation, and my last  
At even, which I bred up with tender hand  
From the first opening bud, and gave ye names!

Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank  
Your tribes, and water from the ambrosial fount ?  
Thee lastly, nuptial bower ! by me adorned      280  
With what to sight or smell was sweet, from thee  
How shall I part, and whither wander down  
Into a lower world, to this obscure  
And wild ? How shall we breathe in other air  
Less pure, accustomed to immortal fruits?"'

Whom thus the Angel interrupted mild:

"Lament not, Eve, but patiently resign

• What justly thou hast lost; nor set thy heart,  
Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine.  
Thy going is not lonely; with thee goes      290  
Thy husband; him to follow thou art bound;  
Where he abides, think there thy native soil."

Adam, by this from the cold sudden damp  
Recovering, and his scattered spirits returned,  
To Michael thus his humble words addressed:

"Celestial ! whether among the Thrones, or  
named

Of them the highest, for such of shape may seem  
Prince above princes, gently hast thou told  
Thy message, which might else in telling wound,  
And in performing end us. What besides      300  
Of sorrow, and dejection, and despair  
Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring;  
Departure from this happy place, our sweet  
Recess, and only consolation left,

CE

CT AND  
MY

Familiar to our eyes, all places else  
Inhospitable appear and desolate,  
Nor knowing us nor known. And, if by prayer  
Incessant I could hope to change the will  
Of Him who all things can, I would not cease  
To weary him with my assiduous cries. 310  
But prayer against his absolute decree  
No more avails than breath against the wind,  
Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:  
Therefore to his great bidding I submit.  
This most afflicts me, that, departing hence,  
As from his face I shall be hid, deprived  
His blessed countenance. Here I could frequent  
With worship place by place where he vouchsafed  
Presence Divine, and to my sons relate,  
On this mount he appeared, under this tree 320  
Stood visible, among these pines his voice  
I heard, here with him at this fountain talked.  
So many grateful altars I would rear  
Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone  
Of lustre from the brook, in memory  
Or monument to ages; and thereon  
Offer sweet-smelling gums, and fruits, and flowers.  
In yonder nether world where shall I seek  
His bright appearances, or footstep trace?  
For, though I fled him angry, yet, recalled 330  
To life prolonged and promised race, I now  
Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts.

Of glory, and far off his steps adore."

To whom thus Michael with regard benign:  
"Adam, thou knowest Heaven his, and all the  
Earth;

Not this rock only; his omnipresence fills  
Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,  
Fomented by his virtual power and warmed,  
All the earth he gave thee to possess and rule,  
No despicable gift: surmise not then

340

His presence to these narrow bounds confined  
Of Paradise or Eden. This had been  
Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread  
All generations, and had hither come,  
From all the ends of the earth, to celebrate  
And reverence thee their great progenitor.  
But this pre-eminence thou hast lost, brought down  
To dwell on even ground now with thy sons.  
Yet doubt not but in valley, and in plain,  
God is, as here, and will be found alike

350

Present; and of his presence many a sign,  
Still following thee, still compassing thee round  
With goodness and paternal love, his face  
Express, and of his steps the track divine.  
Which that thou mayst believe, and be confirmed  
Ere thou from hence depart, know I am sent  
To shew thee what shall come in future days  
To thee and to thy offspring. Good with bad  
Expect to hear, supernal grace contending

CE

CT AND  
MY

With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn      360  
True patience, and to temper joy with fear  
And pious sorrow, equally inured  
By moderation either state to bear,  
Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead  
Safest thy life; and best prepared endure  
Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend  
This hill; let Eve—for I have drenched her eyes—  
Here sleep below, while thou to foresight wakes:—  
As once thou sleptest, while she to life was  
formed.”

To whom thus Adam gratefully replied:      370  
“Ascend, I follow thee, safe guide, the path  
Thou leadest me, and to the hand of Heaven  
submit,

However chastening; to the evil turn  
My obvious breast, arming to overcome  
By suffering, and earn rest from labor won,  
If so I may attain.”—So both ascend  
In the visiōns of God. It was a hill,  
Of Paradise the highest, from whose top  
The hemisphere of earth, in clearest ken,  
Stretched out to the amplest reach of prospect  
lay.

Not higher that hill, nor wider looking  
round,      381

Whereon for different causes the Tempter set  
Our second Adam, in the wilderness.

To shew him all Earth's kingdoms and their  
glory.

His eye might there command wherever stood  
City of old or modern fame, the seat  
Of mightiest empire, from the destined walls  
Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can,  
And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne,  
To Paquin of Sinæan kings; and thence      390  
To Agra and Lahor of great Mogul,  
Down to the Golden Chersonese; or where  
The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since  
In Hispahan or where the Russian Ksar  
In Mosco; or the Sultan in Bizance,  
Turchestan-born; nor could his eye not ken  
The empire of Negus, to his utmost port  
Ercoco, and the less maritime kings,  
Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,  
And Sofala, thought Ophir, to the realm      400  
Of Congo, and Angola farthest south;  
Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount,  
The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Sus,  
Marocco and Algiers, and Tremisen;  
On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway  
The world. In spirit perhaps he also saw  
Rich Mexico, the seat of Motezume,  
And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat  
Of Atabalipa; and yet unspoiled  
Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons      410

CE

CT AND  
MY

Call El Dorado.—But to nobler sights  
Michael from Adam's eyes the film removed,  
Which that false fruit, that promised clearer sight,  
Had bred; then purged with euphrasy and rue  
The visual nerve—for he had much to see—  
And from the well of life three drops instilled.  
So deep the power of these ingredients pierced,  
Even to the inmost seat of mental sight,  
That Adam, now enforced so close his eyes,  
Sunk down, and all his spirits became en-  
tranced;

420

But him the gentle Angel by the hand  
Soon raised, and his attention thus recalled:

“Adam, now ope thine eyes, and first behold  
The effects which thy original crime hath wrought  
In some to spring from thee, who never touched  
The excepted tree, nor with the Snake conspired,  
Nor sinned thy sin, yet from that sin derive  
Corruption, to bring forth more violent deeds.”

His eyes he opened, and beheld a field,  
Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves 430  
New reaped, the other part sheep-walks and folds;  
In the midst an altar as the landmark stood,  
Rustic, of grassy sord. Thither anon  
A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought  
First-fruits, the green ear and the yellow sheaf,  
Unculled, as came to hand; a shepherd next,  
More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock,

Choicest and best; then sacrificing laid  
The inwards and their fat, with incense strewed,  
On the cleft wood, and all due rites per-  
formed. 440

His offering soon propitious fire from heaven  
Consumed, with nimble glance and grateful steam;  
The other's not, for his was not sincere.  
Whereat he inly raged, and, as they talked,  
Smote him into the midriff with a stone  
That beat out life; he fell, and deadly pale  
Groaned out his soul, with gushing blood effused.  
Much at that sight was Adam in his heart  
Dismayed, and thus in haste to the Angel cried:

"O Teacher, some great mischief hath befallen  
To that meek man, who well had sacrificed. 451  
Is piety thus and pure devotion paid?"

To whom Michael thus, he also moved, replied:  
"These are two brethren, Adam, and to come  
Out of thy loins. The unjust the just hath slain,  
For envy that his brother's offering found  
From Heaven acceptance; but the bloody fact  
Will be avenged, and the other's faith approved  
Lose no reward, though here thou see him die,  
Rolling in dust and gore."—To which our  
sire: 460

"Alas, both for the deed and for the cause!  
But have I now seen death? Is this the way  
I must return to native dust? O sight

CE

CT AND  
DMY

Of terror, foul and ugly to behold,  
Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!"

To whom thus Michaël:—"Death thou hast  
seen

In his first shape on Man; but many shapes  
Of Death, and many are the ways that lead  
To his grim cave all-dismal; yet to sense  
More terrible at the entrance than within. 470  
Some, as thou sawest, by violent stroke shall die,  
By fire, flood, famine, by intemperance more  
In meats and drink, which on the earth shall  
bring

Disease dire, of which a monstrous crew  
Before thee shall appear; that thou mayst know  
What misery the inabstinence of Eve  
Shall bring on men."—Immediately a place  
Before his eyes appeared, sad, noisome, dark;  
A lazarus-house it seemed, wherein were laid  
Numbers of all diseased, all maladies 480  
Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms  
Of heartsick agony, all feverous kinds,  
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,  
Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,  
Demoniac phrenzy, moping melancholy,  
And moonstruck madness, pining atrophy,  
Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,  
Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking  
rheums.

Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair  
Tended the sick, busiest from couch to  
couch;

490

And over them triumphant Death his dart  
Shook, but delayed to strike, though oft invoked  
With vows, as their chief good and final hope.  
Sight so deform what heart of rock could long  
Dry-eyed behold? Adam could not, but wept,  
Though not of woman born: compassion quelled  
His best of man, and gave him up to tears  
A space, till firmer thoughts restrained excess;  
And, scarce recovering words, his plaint renewed:

“O miserable mankind, to what fall

500

Degraded, to what wretched state reserved!  
Better end here unborn. Why is life given  
To be thus wrested from us? rather why  
Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew  
What we receive, would either not accept  
Life offered, or soon beg to lay it down,  
Glad to be so dismissed in peace. Can thus  
The image of God in Man, created once  
So goodly and erect, though faulty since,  
To such unsightly sufferings be debased

510

Under inhuman pains? Why should not Man,  
Retaining still divine similitude  
In part, from such deformities be free,  
And for his Maker’s image sake exempt?”  
“Their Maker’s image,” answered Michael, “then

CE

CT AND  
MY

Forsook them, when themselves they vilified  
To serve ungoverned Appetite, and took  
His image whom they served, a brutish vice,  
Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.

Therefore so abject is their punishment      520  
Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own;  
Or if his likeness, by themselves defaced,  
While they pervert pure Nature's healthful rules  
To loathsome sickness; worthily, since they  
God's image did not reverence in themselves."

"I yield it just," said Adam, "and submit.  
But is there yet no other way beside  
These painful passages, how we may come  
To death, and mix with our connatural  
dust?"      523

"There is," said Michael, "if thou well observe  
The rule of *Not too much*, by temperance taught,  
In what thou eatest and drinkest, seeking from  
thence

Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,  
Till many years over thy head return.  
So mayest thou live, till, like ripe fruit, thou  
drop

Into thy mother's lap, or be with ease  
Gathered, not harshly plucked, for death mature.  
This is old-age. But then thou must outlive  
Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will  
change

To withered, weak, and gray; thy senses then, 540  
Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forgo,  
To what thou hast; and, for the air of youth,  
Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign  
A melancholy damp of cold and dry  
To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume  
The balm of life." — To whom our ancestor:

"Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong  
Life much; bent rather, how I may be quit,  
Fairest and easiest, of this cumbrous charge,  
Which I must keep till my appointed day 550  
Of rendering up, and patiently attend  
My dissolution." Michaël replied:

"Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou  
livest

Live well; how long or short, permit to Heaven.  
And now prepare thee for another sight."

He looked, and saw a spacious plain, whereon  
Were tents of various hue. By some were herds  
Of cattle grazing; others, whence the sound  
Of instruments, that made the melodious chime,  
Was heard, of harp and organ, and who  
moved 560

Their stops and chords were seen; his volent  
touch

Instinct, through all proportions low and high,  
Fled, and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.  
In other part stood one, who at the forge

CE

CT AND  
MY

Laboring, two massy clods of iron and brass  
Had melted—whether found where casual fire  
Had wasted woods, on mountain or in vale,  
Down to the veins of earth, thence gliding hot  
To some cave's mouth, or whether washed by  
stream

From underground. The liquid ore he drained 570  
Into fit moulds prepared; from which he formed  
First his own tools; then, what might else be  
wrought

Fusil or graven in metal. After these,  
But on the hither side, a different sort,  
From the high neighboring hills, which was  
their seat,

Down to the plain descended. By their guise  
Just men they seemed, and all their study bent  
To worship God aright, and know his works  
Not hid; nor those things last, which might  
preserve

Freedom and peace to men. They on the plain 580  
Long had not walked, when from the tents behold  
A bevy of fair women, richly gay  
In gems and wanton dress; to the harp they sung  
Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on.  
The men, though grave, eyed them, and let **their**  
**eyes**

Rove without rein; till, in the amorous **net**

Fast caught, they liked and each his liking  
chose.

And now of love they treat, till the evening-star,  
Love's harbinger, appeared; then all in heat  
They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke 590  
Hymen, then first to marriage rites invoked:  
With feast and music all the tents resound.

Such happy interview, and fair event  
Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands,  
flowers,

And charming symphonies, attached the heart  
Of Adam, soon inclined to admit delight, .  
The bent of nature; which he thus expressed:  
“True opener of mine eyes, prime Angel blest!  
Much better seems this vision, and more hope  
Of peaceful days portends, than those two  
past.

Those were of hate and death, or pain much  
worse;

Here nature seems fulfilled in all her ends.”

To whom thus Michael:—“Judge not what is  
best

By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet,  
Created, as thou art, to nobler end,  
Holy and pure, conformity divine.  
Those tents thou sawest so pleasant were the  
tents

Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race

CE

CT AND  
OMY

Who slew his brother. . Studious they appear  
Of arts that polish life, inventors rare;      610  
Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit  
Taught them; but they his gifts acknowledge  
none.

Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget;  
For that fair female troop thou sawest, that seemed  
Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,  
Yet empty of all good, wherein consists  
Woman's domestic honor and chief praise;  
Bred only and completed to the taste  
Of lustful appetence, to sing, to dance,  
To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the  
eye . . . .      620

To these that sober race of men, whose lives  
Religious titled them the sons of God,  
Shall yield up all their virtue, all thais fame  
Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles  
Of these fair atheists, and now swim in joy  
—Ere long to swim at large—and laugh; for which  
The world ere long a world of tears must weep.”

To which thus Adam, of short joy bereft:  
“O pity and shame, that they, who to live well  
Entered so fair, should turn aside to tread      630  
Paths indirect, or in the midway faint!  
But still I see the tenor of Man’s woe  
Holds on the same, from Woman to begin.”  
“From Man’s effeminate slackness it begins,”

Said the Angel, "who should better hold his place,  
By wisdom and superior gifts received.—  
But now prepare thee for another scene."

He looked, and saw wide territory spread  
Before him, towns, and rural works between,  
Cities of men with lofty gates and towers, 640  
Concourse in arms, fierce faces threatening war,  
Giants of mighty bone and bold emprise.  
Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,  
Single or in array of battle ranged,  
Both horse and foot, nor idly mustering stood.  
One way a band select from forage drives  
A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine,  
From a fat meadow ground, or fleecy flock,  
Ewes and their bleating lambs, over the plain,  
Their booty; scarce with life the shepherds fly, 650  
But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray.  
With cruel tournament the squadrons join;  
Where cattle pastured late, now scattered lies  
With carcasses and arms the ensanguined field,  
Deserted. Others to a city strong  
Lay siege, encamped, by battery, scale and mine,  
Assaulting; others from the wall defend  
With dart and javelin, stones and sulphurous fire;  
On each hand slaughter, and gigantic deeds.  
In other part the sceptred haralds call 660  
To council, in the city-gates. Anon  
Grey-headed men and grave, with warriors mixed,

CE

CT AND  
OMY

Assemble, and harangues are heard; but soon  
In factious opposition; till at last,  
Of middle-age one rising, eminent  
In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,  
Of justice, of religion, truth, and peace,  
And judgement from above. Him old and young  
Exploded, and had seized with violent hands,  
Had not a cloud descending snatched him  
thence,

670

Unseen amid the throng. So violence  
Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law,  
Through all the plain, and refuge none was found.  
Adam was all in tears, and to his guide  
Lamenting turned full sad: — ‘Oh, what are these?  
Death’s ministers, not men, who thus deal death  
Inhumanly to men, and multiply  
Ten-thousandfold the sin of him who slew  
His brother; for of whom such massacre  
Make they but of their brethren, men of men? 680  
But who was that just man, whom had not Heaven  
Rescued, had in his righteousness been lost?’

To whom thus Michael:—‘These are the product  
Of those ill-mated marriages thou sawest,  
Where good with bad were matched, who of  
themselves  
Abhor to join, and, by imprudence mixed,  
Produce prodigious births of body or mind.  
Such were these Giants, men of high renown;

For in those days might only shall be admired,  
And valor and heroic virtue called. 690

To overcome in battle, and subdue  
Nations, and bring home spoils, with infinite

Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch.

Of human glory, and, for glory done,  
Of triumph to be styled great Conquerors,

Patrons of mankind, Gods, and sons of Gods;

Destroyers rightlier called, and plagues of men.

Thus fame shall be achieved, renown on earth,  
And what most merits fame in silence hid.

But he, the seventh from thee, whom thou beheldest  
The only righteous in a world perverse, 701

And therefore hated, therefore so beset

With foes, for daring single to be just,

And utter odious truth, that God would come

To judge them with his Saints. . . him the Most

High,

Wrapped in a balmy cloud, with winged steeds,  
Did, as thou sawest, receive, to walk with God,

High in salvation and the climes of bliss,

Exempt from death: to shew thee what reward

Awaits the good, the rest what punishment; 710

Which now direct thine eyes and soon behold."

He looked, and saw the face of things quite  
changed.

The brazen throat of war had ceased to roar;

All now was turned to jollity and game,

CE

GT AND  
OMY

To luxury and riot, feast and dance,  
Marrying or prostituting, as befell,  
Rape or adultery, where passing fair  
Allured them; thence from cups to civil broils.  
At length a reverend sire among them came,  
And of their doings great dislike declared, 720  
And testified against their ways: he oft  
Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,  
Triumphs or festivals, and to them preached  
Conversion and repentance, as to souls  
In prison, under judgements imminent;  
But all in vain. Which when he saw, he ceased  
Contending, and removed his tents far off.  
Then, from the mountain hewing timber tall,  
Began to build a vessel of huge bulk, 729  
Measured by cubic length, and breadth, and hight,  
Smeared round with pitch, and in the side a door  
Contrived, and of provisions laid in large  
For man and beast: when lo, a wonder strange!  
Of every beast, and bird, and insect small  
Came sevens and pairs, and entered in, as taught  
Their order; last the sire, and his three sons,  
With their four wives; and God made fast the door.  
Meanwhile the south-wind arose, and, with black  
wings  
Wide-howering, all the clouds together drove  
From under heaven; the hills, to their supply, 740  
Vapor and exhalation, dusk and moist,

sent up amain; and now the thickened sky  
Like a dark ceiling stood: down rushed the rain  
Impetuous, and continued till the earth  
No more was seen. The floating vessel swum  
Uplifted, and secure, with beaked prow,  
Rode tilting o'er the waves; all dwellings else  
Flood overwhelmed, and them, with all their pomp,  
Deep under water rolled; sea covered sea,  
Sea without shore; and in their palaces,      750  
Where luxury late reigned, sea-monsters whelped  
And stabled: of mankind, so numerous late,  
All left in one small bottom swum embarked.  
How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold  
The end of all thy offspring, end so sad,  
Depopulation! Thee another flood,  
Of tears and sorrow a flood, thee also drowned,  
And sunk thee as thy sons; till, gently reared  
By the Angel, on thy feet thou stoodest at last,  
Though comfortless; as when a father mourns      760  
His children, all in view destroyed at once;  
And scarce to the Angel utteredst thus thy plaint:

"O visions ill foreseen! better had I  
Lived ignorant of future, so had borne  
My part of evil only, each day's lot  
Enough to bear. Those now, that were dispensed  
The burden of many ages, on me light  
At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth  
Abortive, to torment me ere their being,

CE

CT AND  
OMY

With thought that they must be. Let no man seek

Henceforth to be foretold what shall befall 771  
Him or his children; evil he may be sure,  
Which neither his foreknowing can prevent,  
And he the future evil shall, no less  
In apprehension than in substance, feel  
Grievous to bear. But that care now is past,  
Man is not whom to warn; those few escaped  
Famine and anguish will at last consume,  
Wandering that watery desert. I had hope,  
When violence was ceased and war on earth, 780  
All would have then gone well, peace would have  
crowned

With length of happy days the race of Man.  
But I was far deceived; for now I see  
Peace to corrupt, no less than war to waste.  
How comes it thus? unfold, celestial Guide,  
And whether here the race of Man will end."

To whom thus Michael:—"Those, whom last  
thow sawest

In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they  
First seen in acts of prowess eminent  
And great explets, but of true virtue void; 790  
Who having spilt much blood, and done much  
waste,  
Subduing nations, and achieved thereby  
Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey,

Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and  
sloth,

Surfeit and lust, till wantonness and pride

Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.

The conquered also and enslaved by war

Shall, with their freedom lost, all virtue lose

And fear of God, from whom their piety feigned

In sharp contest of battle found no aid 800

Against invaders; therefore, cooled in zeal,

Thenceforth shall practise how to live secure,

Worldly or dissolute, on what their lords

Shall leave them to enjoy; for the earth shall bear

More than enough, that temperance may be tried.

So all shall turn degenerate, all depraved,

Justice and temperance, truth and faith forgot;

One man except, the only sun of light

In a dark age, against example good,

Against allurement, custom, and a world 810

Offended; fearless of reproach and scorn,

Or violence, he of their wicked ways

Shall them admonish, and before them set

The paths of righteousness, how much more safe,

And full of peace, denouncing wrath to come

On their impenitence; and shall return

Of them derided, but of God observed

The one just man alive: by his command

Shall build a wondrous ark, as thou beheldest,

To save himself and household, from amidst 820

A world devote to universal wrack.  
No sooner he, with them of man and beast  
Select for life, shall in the ark be lodged,  
And sheltered round, but all the cataracts  
Of heaven set open on the earth shall pour  
Rain day and night; all fountains of the deep,  
Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp  
Beyond all bounds, till inundation rise  
Above the highest hills. Then shall this mount  
Of Paradise by might of waves be moved      830  
Out of his place, pushed by the horned flood,  
With all his verdure spoiled, and trees adrift,  
Down the Great River to the opening Gulf,  
And there take root an island salt and bare,  
The haunt of seals, and ores, and seamews' clang;  
To teach thee that God attributes to place  
No sanctity, if none be thither brought  
By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.  
And now what further shall ensue behold."

He looked, and saw the ark hull on the  
flood,      840  
Which now abated; for the clouds were fled,  
Driven by a keen north-wind, that blowing dry  
Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decayed;  
And the clear sun on his wide watery glass  
Gazed hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew,  
As after thirst, which made their flowing shrink  
From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole

With soft foot toward the deep, who now had  
stoped

His sluices, as the heaven his windows shut.  
The ark no more now floats, but seems on ground,  
Fast on the top of some high mountain fixed 851

And now the tops of hills as rocks appear;  
With clamor thence the rapid currents drive,  
Toward the retreating sea, their furious tide.  
Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies,  
And after him, the surer messenger,  
A dove, sent forth once and again to spy  
Green tree or ground, whereon his foot may light;  
The second time returning, in his bill

An olive-leaf he brings, pacific sign. 860

Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark  
The ancient sire descends, with all his train.  
Then, with uplifted hands and eyes devout,  
Grateful to Heaven, over his head beholds  
A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow,  
Conspicuous with three listed colors gay,  
Betokening peace from God, and covenant new.

Whereat the heart of Adam erst so sad  
Greatly rejoiced, and thus his joy broke forth:

"O thou, who future things canst represent 870  
As present, heavenly Instructor! I revive  
At this last sight, assured that Man shall live,  
With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.  
Far less I now lament for one whole world

NCE

ICT AND  
OMY

Of wicked sons destroyed, than I rejoice  
For one man found so perfect and so just,  
That God vouchsafes to raise another world  
From him, and all his anger to forget.  
But say, what mean those colored streaks in  
heaven

Distended? as the brow of God appeased? 880  
Or serve they as a flowery verge to bind  
The fluid skirts of that same watery cloud,  
Lest it again dissolve and shower the earth?"

To whom the Archangel:—"Dexterously thou  
aimest.

So willingly doth God remit his ire,  
Though late repenting him of Man depraved;  
Grieved at his heart, when looking down he saw  
The whole earth filled with violence, and all flesh  
Corrupting each their way; yet, those removed,  
Such grace shall one just man find in his  
sight,

890

That he relents not to blot out mankind,  
And makes a covenant never to destroy  
The earth again by flood, nor let the sea  
Surpass his bounds, nor rain to drown the world,  
With man therein or beast; but, when he brings  
Over the earth a cloud, will therein set  
His triple-colored bow, whereon to look,  
And call to mind his covenant. Day and night,

Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost 899  
Shall hold their course, till fire purge all things

new,

Both heaven and earth, wherein the just shall  
dwell."

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ICT AND  
OMY

# PARADISE LOST.

## BOOK XII.

### THE ARGUMENT.

THE Angel Michael continues, from the Flood, to relate what shall succeed; then, in the mention of Abraham, comes by degrees to explain who that Seed of the Woman shall be, which was promised Adam and Eve in the Fall; his incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension; the state of the Church till his second coming. Adam, greatly satisfied and comforted by these relations and promises, descends the hill with Michael; wakens Eve, who all this while had slept, but with gentle dreams composed to quietness of mind and submission. Michael in either hand leads them out of Paradise, the fiery sword waving behind them, and the Cherubim taking their stations to guard the place.

As one who in his journey baits at moon,  
Though bent on speed, so here the Archangel  
paused,  
Betwixt the world destroyed and world restored,  
If Adam aught perhaps might interpose;  
Then with transition sweet new speech resumes:  
“Thus thou hast seen one world begin and  
end;  
And Man as from a second stock proceed.  
Much thou hast yet to see, but I perceive

Thy mortal sight to fail; objects divine  
Must needs impair and weary human sense. 10  
Henceforth what is to come I will relate;  
Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.

"This second source of men, while yet but few,  
And while the dread of judgement past remains  
Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity,  
With some regard to what is just and right  
Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace,  
Laboring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,  
Corn, wine, and oil; and, from the herd or flock,  
Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid, 20  
With large wine-offerings poured, and sacred feast,  
Shall spend their days in joy unblamed, and dwell  
Long time in peace, by families and tribes,  
Under paternal rule: till one shall rise  
Of proud ambitious heart, who, not content  
With fair equality, fraternal state,  
Will arrogate dominion undeserved  
Over his brethren, and quite dispossess  
Concord and law of Nature from the earth;  
Hurting—and men not beasts shall be his game—  
With war and hostile snare such as refuse 31  
Subjection to his empire tyrannous.  
A mighty hunter thence he shall be styled  
Before the Lord, as in despite of Heaven,  
Or from Heaven claiming second sovranity;  
And from rebellion shall derive his name,

NCE

ICT AND  
OMY

Though of rebellion others be accuse.  
He, with a crew, whom like ambition joins  
With him or under him to tyrannize,  
Marching from Eden toward the west, shall  
find

40

The plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge  
Boils out from underground, the mouth of Hell.  
Of brick and of that stuff they cast to build  
A city and tower, whose top may reach to Heaven:  
And get themselves a name; lest, far dispersed  
In foreign lands, their memory be lost;  
Regardless whether good or evil fame.  
But God, who oft descends to visit men,  
Unseen, and through their habitations walks,  
To mark their doings, them beholding soon, 50  
Comes down to see their city, ere the tower  
Obstruct Heaven-towers, and in derision sets  
Upon their tongues a various spirit, to rase  
Quite out their native language, and, instead,  
To sow a jangling noise of words unknown.  
Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud  
Among the builders; each to other calls,  
Not understood, all hoarse, and all in rage,  
As mocked they storm. Great laughter was in  
Heaven

And looking down, to see the hubbub strange 60  
And hear the din: thus was the building left  
Ridiculous, and the work *Confusion* named."

Whereto thus Adam, fatherly displeased :  
"O execrable son! so to aspire  
Above his brethren, to himself assuming  
Authority usurped, from God not given.  
He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,  
Dominion absolute; that right we hold  
By his donation; but man over men  
He made not lord; such title to himself      70  
Reserving, human left from human free.  
But this usurper his encroachment proud  
Stays not on Man; to God his tower intends  
Seige and defiance. Wretched man! what food  
Will he convey up thither, to sustain  
Himself and his rash army? where thin air  
Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross,  
And famish him of breath, if not of bread."  
To whom thus Michael:—"Justly thou abhorrest  
That son, who on the quiet state of men      80  
Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue  
Rational liberty; yet know withal,  
Since thy original lapse, true liberty  
Is lost, which always with right reason dwells,  
Twinned, and from her hath no dividual being.  
Reason in man obscured, or not obeyed;  
Immediately inordinate desires  
And upstart passions catch the government  
From reason, and to servitude reduce  
Man, till then free. Therefore since he permits 90

NCE

ICT AND  
OMY

Within himself unworthy powers to reign  
Over free reason, God, in judgement just,  
Subjects him from without to violent lords.  
Who, oft as undeservedly, enthral  
His outward freedom. Tyranny must be;  
Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.  
Yet sometimes nations will decline so low  
From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong  
But justice, and some fatal curse annexed,  
Deprives them of their outward liberty,      100  
Their inward lost: witness the irreverent son  
Of him who built the ark, who, for the shame  
Done to his father, heard this heavy curse,  
*Servant of Servants*, on his vicious race.

“Thus will this latter, as the former world,  
Still tend from bad to worse, till God at last,  
Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw  
His presence from among them, and avert  
His holy ey’s; resolving from thenceforth  
To leave them to their own polluted ways,      110  
And one peculiar nation to select  
From all the rest, of whom to be invoked;  
A nation from one faithful man to spring.  
Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,  
Bred up in idol-worship; Oh, that men  
—Canst thou believe?—should be so stupid grown,  
While yet the patriarch lived who scaped the  
Flood,

As to forsake the living God, and fall  
To worship their own work, in wood and stone,  
For gods! Yet him God the Most High vouchsafes  
To call by vision, from his father's house, 121  
His kindred and false gods, into a land  
Which he will shew him, and from him will raise  
A mighty nation, and upon him shower  
His benediction so, that in his seed  
All nations shall be blest. He straight obeys,  
Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes.  
I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith  
He leaves his gods, his friends, and native soil,  
Ur of Chaldea, passing now the ford 130  
To Haran; after him a cumbrous train  
Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude;  
Not wandering poor, but trusting all his wealth  
With God, who called him, in a land unknown.  
Canaan he now attains; I see his tents  
Pitched about Sechem, and the neighboring plain  
Of Moreh; there by promise he receives  
Gift to his progeny of all that land,  
From Hamath northward to the desert south  
—Things by their names I call, though yet  
unnamed—  
From Hermon east to the great western Sea; 141  
Mount Hermon, yonder sea, each place behold  
In prospect, as I point them: on the shore  
Mount Carmel: here the double-founted stream.

Jordan, true limit eastward; but his sons  
Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of hills.  
This ponder, that all nations of the earth  
Shall in his seed be blessed. By that seed  
Is meant thy great Deliverer, who shall bruise  
The Serpent's head; whereof to thee anon      150  
Plainlier shall be revealed. This patriarch blest,  
Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,  
A son, and of his son a grandchild, leaves,  
Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown.  
The grandchild, with twelvesons increased, departs  
From Canaan, to a land hereafter called  
Egypt, divided by the river Nile.  
See where it flows, disgorging at seven mouths  
Into the sea. To sojourn in that land  
He comes, invited by a younger son      160  
In time of dearth, a son whose worthy deeds  
Raise him to be the second in that realm  
Of Pharaoh. There he dies, and leaves his race  
Growing into a nation, and now grown  
Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks  
To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests  
Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them  
- slaves,  
In hospitably, and kills their infant males:  
Till by two brethren—those two brethren call  
Moses and Aaron—sent from God to claim      170  
His people from enthralment, they return,

With glory and spoil, back to their promised land.  
But first the lawless tyrant, who denies  
To know their God, or message to regard,  
Must be compelled by signs and judgements dire.  
To blood unshed the rivers must be turned;  
Frogs, lice, and flies must all his palace fill  
With loathed intrusion, and fill all the land;  
His cattle must of rot and murrian die;  
Blotches and blains must all his flesh emboss, 180  
And all his people; thunder mixed with hail,  
Hail mixed with fire, must rend the Egyptian sky,  
And wheel on the earth, devouring where it rolls;  
What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,  
A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down  
Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;  
Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,  
Palpable darkness, and blot out three days;  
Last, with one midnight-stroke, all the first-born  
Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds 190  
The river-dragon tamed at length submits  
To let his sojourners depart, and oft  
Humbles his stubborn heart, but still, as ice,  
More hardened after thaw; till, in his rage,  
Pursuing whom he late dismissed, the sea  
Swallows him with his host; but them lets past,  
As on dry land, between two crystal walls,  
Awed by the rod of Moses so to stand  
Divided, till his rescued gained their shore:

NCE

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OMY

Such wondrous power God to his Saint will  
lend, 200

Though present in his Angel, who shall go  
Before them in a cloud and pillar of fire  
—By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire—  
To guide them in their journey, and remove  
Behind them, while the obdurate king pursues.  
All night he will pursue, but his approach  
Darkness defends between till morning-watch;  
Then, through the fiery pillar and the cloud,  
God looking forth will trouble all his host,  
And craze their chariot-wheels; when by command  
Moses once more his potent rod extends 211  
Over the sea; the sea his rod obeys;  
On their embattled ranks the waves return,  
And overwhelm their war. The race elect  
Safe toward Canaan from the shore advance,  
Through the wild Desert, not the readiest way;  
Lest, entering on the Canaanite alarmed,  
War terrify them inexpert, and fear  
Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather  
Inglorious life with servitude; for life 220  
To noble and ignoble is more sweet  
Untrained in arms, where rashness leads not on.  
This also shall they gain by their delay  
In the wide wilderness, there they shall found  
Their government, and their great Senate choose,

Through the twelve tribes, to rule by laws  
ordained.

God, from the Mount of Sinai, whose grey top  
Shall tremble, he descending, will himself  
In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpets' sound,  
Ordain them laws; part, such as appertain      230  
To civil justice; part, religious rights  
Of sacrifice, informing them, by types  
And shadows, of that destined Seed to bruise  
The Serpent, by what means he shall achieve  
Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God  
To mortal ear is dreadful: they beseech  
That Moses might report to them his will,  
And terror cease; he grants what they besought,  
Instructed that to God is no access  
Without Mediator, whose high office now      240  
Moses in figure bears, to introduce  
One greater, of whose day he shall foretell,  
And all the Prophets, in their age, the times  
Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus laws and rites  
Established, such delight hath God in men  
Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes  
Among them to set up his tabernacle,  
The Holy One with mortal men to dwell.  
By his prescript a sanctuary is framed  
Of cedar, overlaid with gold; therein      250  
An ark, and in the ark his testimony,  
The records of his covenant; over these

NCE

ICT AND  
OMY

A mercy-seat of gold, between the wings  
Of two bright Cherubim; before him burn  
Seven lamps, as in a Zodiac representing  
The heavenly fires. Over the tent a cloud  
Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night,  
Save when they journey; and at length they  
come,

Conducted by his Angel, to the land  
Promised to Abraham and his seed. The rest 260  
Were long to tell; how many battles fought,  
How many kings destroyed, and kingdoms won,  
Or how the sun shall in mid-heaven stand still,  
A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,  
Man's voice commanding, 'Sun in Gibeon stand,  
And thou, moon, in the vale of Aialon,  
Till Israel overcome!' so call the third  
From Abraham, son of Isaac, and from him  
His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win."

Here Adam interposed:— "O sent from Heaven,  
Enlightener of my darkness! gracious things 271  
Thou hast revealed, those chiefly which concern  
Just Abraham and his seed. Now first I find  
Mine eyes true opening, and my heart much  
eased,  
Erewhile perplexed with thoughts what would  
become  
Of me and all mankind; but now I see  
His day, in whom all nations shall be blest,

Favor unmerited by me, who sought  
Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.  
This yet I apprehend not, why to those      280  
Among whom God will deign to dwell on Earth  
So many and so various laws are given;  
So many laws argue so many sins  
Among them; how can God with such reside?"

To whom thus Michael:—"Doubt not but that  
sin

Will reign among them, as thee begot;  
And therefore was law given them, to evince  
Their natural pravity, by stirring up  
Sin against law to fight; that, when they see  
Law can discover sin, but not remove,      290  
Save by those shadowy expiations weak  
The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude  
Some blood more precious must be paid for Man,  
Just for unjust, that in such righteousness,  
To them by faith imputed, they may find  
Justification toward God, and peace  
Of conscience, which the law by ceremonies  
Cannot appease, nor man the moral part  
Perform, and not performing cannot live.  
So law appears imperfect, and but given      300  
With purpose to resign them in full time  
Up to a better covenant, disciplined  
From shadowy types to truth, from flesh to spirit,  
From imposition of strict laws to free

NCE

ICT AND  
OMY

Acceptance of large grace, from servile fear  
To filial, works of law to works of faith.  
And therefore shall not Moses, though of God  
Highly beloved, being but the minister  
Of law, his people into Canaan lead;  
But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Jesus call,      310  
His name and office bearing, who shall quell  
The adversary Serpent, and bring back,  
Through the world's wilderness long wandered  
Man

Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.  
Meanwhile they, in their earthly Canaan placed,  
Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sins  
National interrupt their public peace,  
Provoking God to raise them enemies;  
From whom as oft he saves them penitent  
By Judges first, then under Kings; of whom    320  
The second, both for piety renowned  
And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive  
Irrevocable, that his regal throne  
For ever shall endure. The like shall sing  
All Prophecy, that of the royal stock  
Of David—so I name this king<sup>2</sup>—shall rise  
A son, the Woman's Seed, to thee foretold,  
Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust  
All nations, and to kings foretold of kings  
The last, for of his reign shall be no end.      330  
But first a long succession must ensue,

And his next son, for wealth and wisdom famed,  
The clouded ark of God, till then in tents  
Wandering, shall in a glorious temple enshrine.  
Such follow him as shall be registered  
Part good, part bad; of bad the longer scroll,  
Whose foul idolatries and other faults,  
Heaped to the popular sum, will so incense  
God, as to leave them, and expose their land,  
Their city, his temple, and his holy ark,      340  
With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey  
To that proud city, whose high walls thou sawest  
Left in confusion, Babylon thence called.  
There in captivity he lets them dwell,  
The space of seventy years, then brings them  
back,

Remembering mercy, and his covenant sworn  
To David, stablished as the days of Heaven.  
Returned from Babylon, by leave of kings,  
Their lords, whom God disposed, the house of  
God

They first re-edify, and for a while      350  
In mean estate live moderate, till, grown  
In wealth and multitude, factious they grow.  
But first among the priests dissension springs,  
Men who attend the altar, and should most  
Endeavor peace! Their strife pollution brings  
Upon the temple itself: at last they seize  
The sceptre, and regard not David's sons,

Then lose it to a stranger, that the true  
Anointed King, Messiah, might be born  
Barred of his right; yet at his birth a star, 360  
Unseen before in heaven, proclaims him come,  
And guides the eastern sages, who inquire  
His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold.  
His place of birth a solemn Angel tells  
To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night;  
They gladly thither haste, and, by a quire  
Of squadroned Angels, hear his carol sung.  
A Virgin is his mother, but his sire  
The Power of the Most High. He shall ascend  
The throne hereditary, and bound his reign 370  
With earth's wide bounds, his glory with the  
heavens."

He ceased, discerning Adam with such joy  
Surcharged, as had, like grief, been dewed in  
tears,  
Without the vent of words, which these he  
breathed:

"O prophet of glad tidings, finisher  
Of utmost hope! now clear I understand  
What oft my steadiest thoughts have searched  
in vain;  
Why our great Expectation should be called  
The Seed of Woman. Virgin Mother, hail!  
High in the love of Heaven, yet from my loins 380  
Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son

Of God Most High: so God with Man unites.  
Needs must the Serpent now his capital bruise  
Expect with mortal pain. Say where and when  
Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the victor's  
heel."

To whom thus Michael:—"Dream not of their  
fight,

As of a duel, or the local wounds  
Of head or heel. Not therefore joins the Son  
Manhood to Godhead, with more strength to foil  
Thy enemy; nor so is overcome 390  
Satan, whose fall from Heaven, a deadlier bruise,  
Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound;  
Which he, who comes thy Savior, shall recure,  
Not by destroying Satan, but his works  
In thee and in thy seed; nor can this be,  
But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,  
Obedience to the law of God, imposed  
On penalty of death; and suffering death,  
The penalty to thy transgression due,  
And due to theirs which out of thine will  
grow; 400

So only can high justice rest appaid.  
The law of God exact he shall fulfil,  
Both by obedienee and by love, though love  
Alone fulfil the law; thy punishment  
He shall endure, by coming in the flesh  
To a reproachful life and cursed death;

NCE

ICT AND  
OMY

Proclaiming life to all who shall believe  
In his redemption, and that his obedience  
Imputed becomes theirs by faith, his merits  
To save them, not their own, though legal,  
works. 41d

For this he shall live hated, be blasphemed,  
Seized on by force, judged, and to death con-  
demned,

A shameful and accursed, nailed to the cross,  
By his own nation, slain for bringing life;  
But to the cross he nails thy enemies,  
The law that is against thee, and the sins  
Of all mankind, with him there crucified,  
Never to hurt them more who rightly trust  
In this his satisfaction : so he dies,  
But soon revives; Death over him no power 42a  
Shall long usurp. Ere the third dawning light  
Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise  
Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,  
Thy ransom paid, which Man from death redeems;  
His death for Man, as many as offered life  
Neglect not, and the benefit embrace,  
By faith not void of works. This godlike act  
Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldest have  
died,

In sin forever lost from life; this act  
Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his  
strength, 430

Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms,  
And fix far deeper in his head their stings  
Than temporal death shall bruise the victor's heel,  
Or theirs whom he redeems,—a death like sleep.  
A gentle wafting to immortal life.

NCE  
Nor, after resurrection, shall he stay  
Longer on earth than certain times to appear  
To his disciples, men who in his life  
Still followed him; to them shall leave in charge  
To teach all nations what of him they learned 440  
And his salvation, them who shall believe  
Baptizing in the profluent stream; the sign  
Of washing them from guilt of sin to life  
Pure, and in mind prepared, if so befall,  
For death, like that which the Redeemer died.

All nations they shall teach; for from that day  
Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins  
Salvation shall be preached, but to the sons  
Of Abraham's faith, wherever through the world;  
So in his seed all nations shall be blest. 450

Then to the Heaven-of-heavens he shall ascend  
With victory, triumphing through the air  
Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise  
The Serpent, prince of air, and drag in chains  
Through all his realm, and there confounded leave;  
Then enter into glory, and resume  
His seat at God's right hand, exalted high  
Above all names in Heaven; and thence shall come,

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OMY

When this World's dissolution shall be ripe,  
With glory and power to judge both quick and  
dead;

To judge the unfaithful dead, but to reward 461  
His faithful, and receive them into bliss,  
Whether in Heaven or Earth; for then the Earth  
Shall all be Paradise, far happier place  
Than this of Eden, and far happier days."

So spake the Archangel Michaël; then paused,  
As at the World's great period; and our sire,  
Replete with joy and wonder, thus replied:

"O Goodness infinite, Goodness immense!  
That all this good of evil shall produce, 470  
And evil turn to good; more wonderful  
Than that which by creation first brought forth  
Light out of darkness! Full of doubt I stand,  
Whether I should repent me now of sin,  
By me done and occasioned, or rejoice  
Much more, that much more good thereof shall  
spring;

To God more glory, more good-will to men  
From God, and over wrath grace shall abound  
But say, if our Deliverer up to Heaven  
Must reascend, what will betide the few, 480  
His faithful, left among the unfaithful herd,  
The enemies of truth? Who then shall guide  
His people, who defend? Will they not deal

Worse with his followers than with him they dealt?"

"Be sure they will," said the Angel; "but from Heaven

He to his own a Comforter will send,  
The promise of the Father, who shall dwell,  
His Spirit, within them, and the law of faith  
Working through love upon their hearts shall write,

To guide them in all truth; and also arm 490  
With spiritual armor, able to resist

Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts;

What man can do against them not afraid,  
Though to the death; against such cruelties  
With inward consolations recompensed,  
And oft supported so as shall amaze  
Their proudest persecutors. For the Spirit  
Poured first on his Apostles, whom he sends  
To evangelize the nations, then on all  
Baptized, shall them with wondrous gifts

endue 500

To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,  
As did their Lord before them. Thus they win  
Great numbers of each nation to receive  
With joy the tidings brought from Heaven: at  
length,

Their ministry performed, and race well run,  
Their doctrine and their story written left,

They die; but in their room, as they forewarn,  
Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous  
wolves,

Who all the sacred mysteries of Heaven  
To their own vile advantage shall turn      510  
Of lucre and ambition, and the truth  
With superstitions and traditions taint,  
Left only in those written records pure,  
Though not but by the Spirit understood.  
Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,  
Places, and titles, and with these to join  
Secular power; though feigning still to act  
By spiritual, to themselves appropriating  
The Spirit of God, promised alike and given  
To all believers; and from that pretence      520  
Spiritual laws by carnal power shall force  
On every conscience; laws which none shall find  
Left them inrolled, or what the Spirit within  
Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then  
But force the Spirit of Grace itself, and bind  
His consort, Liberty? what, but unbuild  
His living temples, built by faith to stand,  
Their own faith, not another's? for, on Earth,  
Who against faith and conscience can be heard  
Infallible? yet many will presume.      530  
Whence heavy persecution shall arise  
On all who in the worship persevere  
Of spirit and truth; the rest, far greater part.

Will deem in outward rites and specious forms  
Religion satisfied; Truth shall retire  
Bestuck with slanderous darts, and works of faith  
Rarely be found. So shall the world go on,  
To good malignant, to bad men benign,  
Under her own weight groaning; till the day  
Appear of respiration to the just, 540  
And vengeance to the wicked, at return  
Of Him so lately promised to thy aid,  
The Woman's Seed, obscurely then foretold,  
Now amplier known thy Savior and thy Lord;  
Last, in the clouds, from Heaven to be revealed  
In glory of the Father, to dissolve  
Satan with his perverted world; then raise  
From the conflagrant mass, purged and refined,  
New heavens, new earth, ages of endless date,  
Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love, 550  
To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss."

He ended; and thus Adam last replied:  
"How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest,  
Measured this transient World, the race of Time,  
Till Time stand fixed! beyond is all abyss,  
Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.  
Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,  
Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill  
Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain;  
Beyond which was my folly to aspire. 560  
Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,

And love with fear the only God, to walk  
As in his presence, ever to observe  
His providence, and on him sole depend,  
Merciful over all his works, with good  
Still overcoming evil, and by small  
Accomplishing great things, by things deemed  
weak

Subverting worldly-strong, and worldly-wise  
By simply-meek; that suffering for truth's sake  
Is fortitude to highest victory, 570  
And, to the faithful, death the gate of life;  
Taught this by his example, whom I now  
Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest."

To whom thus also the Angel last replied:  
"This having learned, thou hast attained the sum  
Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars  
Thou knewest by name, and all the ethereal  
powers,

All secrets of the Deep, all Nature's works,  
Or works of God in heaven, air, earth, or sea,  
And all the riches of this world enjoyedst, 580  
And all the rule, one empire. Only add  
Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith,  
Add virtue, patience, temperance; add love,  
By name to come called charity, the soul  
Of all the rest; then wilt thou not be loth  
To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess  
A Paradise within thee, happier far.—

Let us descend now therefore from this top  
 Of speculation; for the hour precise  
 Exacts our parting hence. And see! the  
 guards,

59a

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By me encamped on yonder hill, except  
 Their motion; at whose front a flaming sword,  
 In signal of remove, waves fiercely round.  
 We may no longer stay: go, waken Eve.  
 Her also I with gentle dreams have calmed,  
 Portending good, and all her spirits composed  
 To meek submission thou, at season fit,  
 Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard;  
 Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,  
 The great deliverance by her seed to come— 60a  
 For by the Woman's Seed—on all mankind;  
 That ye may live, which will be many days,  
 Both in one faith unanimous, though sad  
 With cause for evils past, yet much more cheered  
 With meditation on the happy end.”

He ended, and they both descend the hill.  
 Descended, Adam to the bower where Eve  
 Lay sleeping ran before her, but found her waked,  
 And thus with words not sad she him received:  
 “Whence thou returnest, and whither wentest,  
 I know; 610  
 For God is also in sleep, and dreams advise,  
 Which he hath sent propitious, some great good  
 Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress

NCE

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NOMY

Wearied I fell asleep. But now lead on;  
In me is no delay; with thee to go,  
Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,  
Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me  
Art all things under heaven, all places thou,  
Who for my wilful crime art banished hence.  
This further consolation yet secure . . . . .  
I carry hence; though all by me is lost,  
Such favor I unworthy am vouchsafed,  
By me the Promised Seed shall all restore."

So spake our mother Eve, and Adam heard  
Well pleased, but answered not; for now too nigh  
The Archangel stood, and from the other hill  
To their fixed station, all in bright array,  
The Cherubim descended; on the ground  
Gliding meteorous, as evening mist,  
Risen from a river, o'er the marshy glides, . . . . .  
And gathers round fast at the laborer's heel,  
Homeward returning. High in front advanced,  
The banished sword of God before them blazed,  
Fierce as a comet, which with torrid heat,  
And vapor as the Libyan air adust,  
Began to parch that temperate clime; whereat  
In either hand the hastening Angel caught  
Our lingering parents, and to the eastern gate  
Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast  
To the subjected plain; then disappeared. . . . .  
They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld

Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,  
Waved over by that flaming brand; the gate  
With dreadful faces thronged and fiery arms.  
Some natural tears they dropped, but wiped them  
soon;

The world was all before them, where to choose  
Their place of rest, and Province their guide.  
They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and  
slow,

Through Eden took their solitary way.

THE END.

